



**Ancient Roots,
Modern Minds:
Rediscovering
the Indian
Knowledge
System**

Editors:

**Lakhya Protim Nirmolia
Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah
Utpal Sadhonider**

ISBN-978-93-92529-59-7

Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: **Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System**

Editors

Lakhya Protim Nirmolia

Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah

Utpal Sadhonider



The e-book *Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System* presents a compelling anthology of selected scholarly papers, meticulously curated and edited by Lakhya Protim Nirmolia, Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah and Utpal Sadhonider. Published by Sabda Prakash, Jorhat, Assam, Pin-785001—this volume distils the subtle undercurrents of resistance and resilience that have long animated global liberation struggles, offering readers an intimate portal into the nascent murmurs that prelude transformative change. *First Edition* : March 2026

Editorial Board

Dr. Rashmi Rekha Saikia, Principal

Editors

Lakhya Protim Nirmolia
Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah
Utpal Sadhonider

Review Members

Dr. Tarun Gogoi
Dr. Bikash Nath
Ms. Navanita Nath

PUBLICATION CELL

Dr. Rashmi Rekha Saikia, Principal-Chairperson
Mr. Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah - Convener
Lakhya Protim Nirmolia, Coordinator, IQAC, Member
Dr. Sikhamoni Gogoi, Member
Mrs. Minakshi Hazarika, Member

The e-book *Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System*, edited by Lakhya Protim Nirmolia and Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah and Utpal Sadhonider and published by Sabda Prakash, presents scholarly interpretations and historical analyses drawn from the contributed papers. The views, opinions, and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the perspectives of the editors, publisher, or any affiliated institutions. This work is intended for academic, educational, and informational purposes only and should not be construed as professional advice, endorsement, or factual guarantee. Readers are encouraged to consult primary sources and diverse viewpoints for a comprehensive understanding. All rights reserved; no part of this publication may be reproduced without prior written permission from the publisher.

Message from the Principal

It is with great pleasure and profound pride that I extend my heartfelt goodwill to the publication of the e-book titled “Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System”. In an era where the world is rapidly evolving, it is imperative that we reconnect with the timeless wisdom of our ancient heritage. This e-book serves as a beacon, illuminating the profound insights of India’s knowledge traditions—ranging from Vedic sciences and philosophy to indigenous practices that have shaped civilizations.

At Kakojan College, we are committed to fostering an educational environment that blends traditional values with contemporary learning. This work resonates deeply with our mission, encouraging students and scholars alike to appreciate the richness of our cultural legacy while applying it to address modern challenges. It is a commendable effort to bridge the past and the present, inspiring a new generation to explore and innovate.

I congratulate the authors, editors, and all contributors for this valuable addition to the discourse on Indian knowledge systems. May this e-book reach far and wide, igniting curiosity and promoting a deeper understanding of our shared heritage.

Wishing you all success in this enlightening endeavour.

Sincerely,

Dr. Rashmi Rekha Saikia

Principal

Kakojan College, Jorhat, Assam

Content Page

	Editorial /6
Lakhya Protim Nirmolia	Concept Note/7
Aditi Deka Pathak	Site, Research, and Scenography in Contemporary Art: An Analytical Study with Special Reference to Nabajyoti Nagar near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra, Guwahati, Assam/15
Dr. Gautam Das	Structural Domination and Gendered Labour: The Case of Tea Garden Women in Colonial Assam/31
Guptajit Pathak	Revisiting the Relevance of the Philosophy of Srimanta Sankaradeva in the Contemporary World: A Historical, Cultural and Social Analysis/43
Dr. Bikash Nath	The Conceptual Inference of Womanhood since the Ancient to the Modern in Indian Knowledge System: A Synoptic Overview/59
Dr. Kauranga Borgohain	Spiritual Education as a Preventive Measure Against Youth Extremism/73
Mr Sanjib Phukan	Yoga : A Pathway to Sustainable Living/81
Dr. Nirmali Doley	Environmental Sustainability in the Indian Knowledge System/88
Utpal Sadhoni	The Convergence of Chemistry and Indian Knowledge System (IKS)/96
Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah	Harmony in Devotion: The Ethical Teachings of Srimanta Sankaradeva's Neo-Vaishnavism/101
Dr. Dharmendra Dutta	Bharatiya Gyan Padhatit Asomiya Sahityar Bhumika/108
Manob Jyoti Saikia	Bharatiya Gyan Padhatit Manusmiriti: Ek Rajnoitik Bishlekhon/114

Acknowledgements from the Editors

It has been a profound privilege to serve as editors for *Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System*. This remarkable work would not have reached your hands without the extraordinary collaboration of many dedicated souls.

Our deepest gratitude goes to the author, whose passion for India's ancient wisdom breathed life into every page. Working with such visionary scholarship has been the highlight of our editorial careers.

Special acknowledgement to Dr. Rashmi Rekha Saikia, Principal, Kakojan College, whose academic leadership and encouragement provided the fertile ground where these ancient seeds took root. Your vision for cultural preservation inspired this journey.

Special appreciation to our tireless publishing team—the designers who transformed complex concepts into visual elegance, the proofreaders whose meticulous care preserved authenticity, and the production staff who navigated countless revisions with grace.

To the academic reviewers and cultural consultants whose expertise ensured scholarly rigor while honouring living traditions—your insights strengthened this bridge between ancient sages and modern readers.

We extend heartfelt thanks to Ranjit Gogoi, Sabda Prakash, Jorhat, Assam for helping us to publish the e-book. Without your support it is not possible to publish this e-book in due time.

Finally, to you, the reader—may this e-book reignite the timeless wisdom within, connecting yesterday's rishis with tomorrow's seekers.

With deep respect and gratitude,

The Editorial Team

Concept Note

**Ancient Roots, Modern Minds:
Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge
System**

Lakhya Protim Nirmolia

Introduction

In a world increasingly shaped by digital innovation, artificial intelligence, and global challenges like climate change and mental health crises, there is a profound need to look back at the wellsprings of human wisdom. The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) represents one such treasure trove, encompassing a rich tapestry of ancient philosophies, scientific inquiries, medicinal practices, artistic expressions, and governance models that have endured for thousands of years. Rooted in sacred texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, and epics such as the Mahabharata and Ramayana, IKS is not a static relic but a dynamic framework that has influenced civilizations across Asia and beyond. The title “Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System” captures this essence—a call to reconnect with these foundational roots while applying modern analytical minds to reinterpret and revitalize them.

This rediscovery is particularly timely in the 21st century, where Western paradigms often dominate discourse, leading to a cultural amnesia among younger generations in India and the

diaspora. For instance, in places like Guwahati, Assam, where ancient traditions blend with modern urban life, there is a unique opportunity to integrate IKS into local education and community practices. Imagine students learning about sustainable agriculture from Vedic hymns that describe ecological balance, or entrepreneurs drawing from ancient economic treatises to build ethical businesses. This concept note delves into the multifaceted dimensions of IKS, exploring its historical depth, analytical relevance, and potential for contemporary application. By bridging ancient insights with modern perspectives, we can address pressing issues such as environmental degradation, ethical dilemmas in technology, and the quest for personal fulfilment. The goal is not blind revival but a thoughtful synthesis that empowers individuals and societies to navigate the complexities of the present with the wisdom of the past.

Historically, IKS emerged in the Indus Valley Civilization around 3000 BCE, evolving through Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, and later Islamic and colonial influences. It emphasizes holistic understanding—integrating body, mind, and spirit—unlike the reductionist approaches sometimes seen in modern science. Concepts like karma (action and consequence) and maya (illusion) offer profound psychological insights, while advancements in linguistics through Panini’s grammar prefigured modern computational models. Rediscovering IKS means reclaiming these contributions, often overshadowed by Eurocentric histories. In education, for example, it could shift from memorization to experiential learning, as in the ancient gurukul system where pupils lived with gurus, imbibing knowledge through dialogue and practice. This approach fosters critical thinking and empathy, qualities essential in today’s polarized world.

Moreover, in a globalized era, IKS provides a counter-narrative to materialism, promoting values like ahimsa (non-violence) and satya (truth), which resonate with movements for peace and sustainability. Think of how yoga, derived from Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras, has become a global phenomenon for stress

relief, yet its deeper philosophical roots are underexplored. By rediscovering these, modern minds can innovate—perhaps developing AI ethics based on dharma (righteous duty) or urban planning inspired by Vastu Shastra’s harmonious designs. This introduction sets the stage for a deeper analysis, highlighting that IKS is not just heritage but a toolkit for future resilience.

Analysis

The Indian Knowledge System is a vast, interconnected web of knowledge that defies simple categorization. It spans disciplines from metaphysics to mathematics, medicine to metallurgy, and ethics to ecology. At its heart lies a worldview that sees the universe as an organic whole, where knowledge (*jnana*) is pursued not for domination but for liberation (*moksha*). This contrasts sharply with some modern systems that prioritize empirical evidence over intuitive wisdom. To rediscover IKS, we must first unpack its core components and then examine their relevance through modern lenses.

Philosophical Foundations and Ethical Insights

One of the pillars of IKS is its philosophical depth, drawn from schools like Advaita Vedanta, which posits non-duality (*advaita*), suggesting that the individual self (*atman*) is one with the universal consciousness (*brahman*). This idea, articulated in texts like the Chandogya Upanishad, offers a profound antidote to modern individualism and isolation. In today’s context, where mental health issues like anxiety and depression are rampant, these concepts can inform psychotherapy. For example, mindfulness practices rooted in Vedantic meditation have been adapted into programs like Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), showing empirical benefits in reducing stress hormones.

Ethically, the Bhagavad Gita stands out as a timeless guide. Set on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, it explores dilemmas of duty, detachment, and selfless action (*nishkama karma*). Modern leaders in business or politics could draw from this to navigate ethical quandaries, such as corporate social responsibility or diplomatic negotiations. Imagine a CEO facing layoffs; Gita’s

emphasis on performing one's role without attachment to outcomes could foster compassionate decision-making. New ideas here include integrating Gita principles into leadership training programs, perhaps through case studies that blend ancient scenarios with contemporary business ethics simulations.

Furthermore, Jainism's principle of *anekantavada* (many-sidedness) promotes pluralism, recognizing that truth is multifaceted. In an age of fake news and echo chambers, this could inspire media literacy curricula, teaching individuals to consider multiple perspectives before forming opinions. Buddhist concepts like the Eightfold Path, emphasizing right understanding and right action, align with sustainable development goals, offering frameworks for environmental ethics. A novel application might be in conflict resolution, where *anekantavada* facilitates dialogues in diverse societies like India's Northeast, including Assam, where ethnic harmonies are crucial.

Scientific and Technological Heritage

IKS's scientific contributions are often underappreciated. Ancient Indians conceptualized zero (*shunya*) in the Bakhshali manuscript, revolutionizing mathematics and enabling modern computing. Aryabhata's astronomical models, including the Earth's rotation, predated Copernicus by centuries. The Surya Siddhanta details precise calculations of planetary movements, which could inform today's space research. Rediscovering these involves digitizing ancient manuscripts and using AI to analyze them, potentially uncovering lost algorithms for cryptography or data processing.

In technology, metallurgy in the Iron Pillar of Delhi demonstrates corrosion-resistant iron, inspiring modern materials science for durable infrastructure. Vastu Shastra's architectural principles, focusing on energy flow (prana), could guide eco-friendly building designs amid urbanization. A fresh idea: applying these to smart cities, where Vastu-inspired layouts optimize natural light and ventilation, reducing energy consumption. Challenges include verifying claims—some pseudoscientific assertions, like

unsubstantiated ancient aviation, must be debunked through rigorous scholarship to maintain credibility.

Medicine within IKS, particularly Ayurveda and Siddha, emphasizes preventive care through dosha balance (*vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*). Herbs like turmeric (curcumin) have been validated for anti-inflammatory properties in modern studies. Integrating this with allopathy could create hybrid treatments for chronic diseases. For instance, post-COVID recovery programs might combine Ayurvedic yoga with Western vaccines. New explorations could involve bioinformatics to map ancient herbal genomes, accelerating drug discovery.

Social and Economic Dimensions

Socially, IKS promoted ideals of varnashrama dharma, a flexible social order based on qualities rather than birth, though historical rigidities like caste emerged. Rediscovering this means critiquing distortions and emphasizing equality in texts like the Rig Veda's Purusha Sukta, which envisions society as an interdependent body. In modern India, this could inform policies on social justice, fostering inclusive growth. Gender roles in IKS varied; goddesses like Durga symbolize feminine power, inspiring women's empowerment initiatives. A contemporary twist: using epic narratives in storytelling workshops to challenge stereotypes.

Economically, Kautilya's Arthashastra is a masterpiece on statecraft, covering taxation, trade, and welfare. Its realpolitik balanced with ethical governance offers lessons for emerging economies. In a globalized market, principles like fair trade from ancient guilds could counter exploitative capitalism. Innovative applications include blockchain-based systems inspired by transparent accounting in ancient texts, ensuring ethical supply chains.

Challenges and Pathways Forward

Despite its richness, rediscovering IKS faces hurdles. Colonial education, as critiqued by Macaulay's Minute, devalued indigenous knowledge, creating a cultural disconnect. Today, globalization amplifies this, with youth preferring Western pop

culture. Pseudoscience risks, where myths are presented as facts, undermine legitimacy—think of exaggerated claims about ancient plastic surgery. To counter, interdisciplinary research is key: historians collaborating with scientists to validate ideas empirically.

Education reform is vital. Incorporating IKS into curricula, as per India’s National Education Policy 2020, could include modules on Vedic math for faster calculations or yoga for holistic development. Community initiatives, like in Assam’s tea gardens, might revive traditional healing practices alongside modern agriculture. Technology aids this—virtual reality simulations of ancient observatories could make learning immersive.

Globally, IKS contributes to dialogues on sustainability. The concept of prithvi (earth) as a mother in Vedic hymns aligns with Gaia theory, urging eco-conscious policies. In AI ethics, dharma could guide algorithms to prioritize human well-being over profit. Ultimately, this analysis underscores that IKS’s rediscovery is an evolutionary process, blending ancient roots with modern minds for innovative solutions.

Conclusion

The endeavour to rediscover the Indian Knowledge System under the banner of “Ancient Roots, Modern Minds” is more than an intellectual pursuit; it’s a pathway to cultural renaissance and global relevance. By preserving and adapting ancient wisdom, we equip ourselves to tackle existential threats like biodiversity loss and social fragmentation. This synthesis fosters resilience, creativity, and harmony, proving that heritage is a living force.

Future prospects are promising: international collaborations could establish IKS research centres, blending Eastern and Western methodologies. In regions like Assam, local folklore integrated with IKS could preserve indigenous knowledge. The challenge is to avoid romanticization, ensuring critical engagement. Success lies in measurable impacts—improved well-being, innovative patents, or policy changes inspired by ancient insights. As we move forward, let these ancient roots nourish modern minds, illuminating a balanced, enlightened future for all.

References

1. Arya, Usharbudh. 'Meditation and the Art of Living'. Himalayan Institute Press, 1981.
2. Basham, A.L. 'The Wonder That Was India'. Grove Press, 1954.
3. Charaka. 'Charaka Samhita'. Translated by P.V. Sharma. Chaukhambha Orientalia, 1981.
4. Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad. 'Science and Society in Ancient India'. Research India Publications, 1978.
5. Dasgupta, Surendranath. 'A History of Indian Philosophy', Vol. 1. Cambridge University Press, 1922.
6. Doniger, Wendy. 'The Hindus: An Alternative History'. Penguin Press, 2009.
7. Eck, Diana L. 'India: A Sacred Geography'. Harmony Books, 2012.
8. Flood, Gavin. 'An Introduction to Hinduism'. Cambridge University Press, 1996.
9. Iyengar, B.K.S. 'Light on Yoga'. Schocken Books, 1966.
10. Kautilya. 'The Arthashastra'. Translated by R. Shamasastri. Wesleyan University Press, 1915.
11. Mohanty, J.N. 'Classical Indian Philosophy'. Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.
12. Mookerji, Radha Kumud. 'Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist'. Motilal Banarsidass, 1947.
13. Nehru, Jawaharlal. 'The Discovery of India'. Oxford University Press, 1946.
14. Olivelle, Patrick. 'Upanishads'. Oxford University Press, 1996.
15. Patanjali. 'Yoga Sutras of Patanjali'. Translated by Swami Vivekananda. Ramakrishna Mission, 1896.
16. Radhakrishnan, S. 'Indian Philosophy', Vol. 1. Oxford University Press, 1923.
17. Sen, Amartya. 'The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity'. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.

18. Subbarayappa, B.V. 'Indian Astronomy: A Source-Book'. Nehru Centre, 1985.
19. Sushruta. 'Sushruta Samhita'. Translated by Kaviraj Kunja Lal Bhishagratna. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1907.
20. Zimmer, Heinrich. 'Philosophies of India'. Princeton University Press, 1951.

Author:
Assistant Professor,
Department of History, Kakojan College,
Jorhat, Assam

Paper Received: 07/03/2026 Paper Accepted: 10/03/2026

Paper Published: 12/03/2026

Site, Research, and Scenography in Contemporary Art: An Analytical Study with Special Reference to Nabajyoti Nagar near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra, Guwahati, Assam

Aditi Deka Pathak

Abstract

Scenic design refers to the creative process of constructing immersive environments through a comprehensive approach that integrates space, structure, lighting, sound, graphics, and sometimes costumes. It is fundamentally a collaborative practice that contributes to effective visual storytelling. Within contemporary artistic and exhibition practices, scenography functions as a multidisciplinary framework that shapes the atmosphere, spatial perception, and emotional tone of a performance or visual display. Elements such as lighting, sound, scenic arrangement, and costume design collectively contribute to the creation of a coherent environment that enhances narrative expression and audience interpretation.

The present study explores the role of scenography as an interpretive and communicative strategy within contemporary art

and exhibition practices. The research suggests that scenographic approaches can significantly encourage audience interaction, participation, and engagement, thereby enabling cultural institutions and exhibition spaces to communicate their narratives and collections more effectively. By integrating spatial context, artistic research, and staged presentation, scenography enhances both the experiential and interpretive dimensions of visual culture. In this context, the paper explores the influence of site, research, and scenography on contemporary artistic practice, with particular emphasis on Nabajyoti Nagar near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra in Guwahati, Assam, highlighting how localized spatial contexts shape artistic production and audience experience.

Keywords:

Contemporary Art, Scenography, Site-Specific Art, Artistic Research, Spatial Context, Visual Culture, Nabajyoti Nagar, Guwahati

Introduction:

In recent years, several design strategies in research and exhibition practices have focused on branding and visual merchandising through diverse narrative techniques. These approaches attempt to enhance the presentation of cultural and historical content within exhibition spaces. However, the effective communication of instructional or historical material requires a specific design strategy that can successfully establish an active connection between the audience and the knowledge being presented. Scholars and designers continue to explore exhibition methodologies that can improve audience engagement and participation, particularly in educational and museum contexts. Contemporary museums increasingly position themselves as inclusive cultural institutions that represent and reflect multiple communities, ethnicities, and cultural identities.

For interactivity in art and exhibitions to become meaningful, aesthetic interfaces must stimulate the critical thinking of the

audience. Through such interactive processes, viewers move beyond passive observation and become active participants in interpreting and experiencing the artwork. This engagement influences audiences both physically and psychologically, as they consciously participate in the interpretive process (Barry, 2014).

The concept of immersive experience further strengthens this interactive dimension by surrounding the viewer with narrative and visual elements that create a heightened sense of presence. Immersive exhibitions generate an atmospheric environment in which the viewer experiences a surreal or otherworldly “feeling of reality.” In this context, the artwork transforms into a spatial and sensory environment rather than remaining a static object of observation (Papadaki, 2020). Such immersive environments convert exhibition spaces into staged scenes, shifting viewers from a passive and one-dimensional experience toward an active role within a newly constructed setting.

Within contemporary exhibition practices, the concept of aesthetics is no longer limited to formal compositional elements such as materials, color schemes, arrangement, and infographics. Instead, aesthetics increasingly emerges as a lived and experiential phenomenon shaped by spatial interaction and environmental perception. Scenography offers an innovative framework for establishing such experiential forms of expression. This study therefore attempts to present a new perspective on the relationship between site, research, and scenography in artistic practice. Originally derived from theatre studies, scenography has gradually been adopted in exhibition design to create more performative and interactive environments. As a multidisciplinary design strategy, scenography introduces new possibilities for representation, storytelling, and audience engagement within contemporary exhibition spaces.

Statement of the Research Problem:

Lighting, sound, scenery, and costume design are all components that help create an environment and mood for a

theatrical performance and are together referred to as “scenography.” Scenography is employed in certain works, particularly those that happen outside of theaters, to create a certain spatial relationship or audience-performance interaction. With a focus on Nabajyoti Nagar, close to Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam, the influence of site, research, and scenography on contemporary art is extremely valuable.

Literature Review:

1. Dea Aulia Widyaevan (2023), in the paper “*Staging the Space: Scenography in Exhibiton Design*” highlight that In Indonesia, commercial and industrial uses account for the majority of exhibition design applications. Many design strategies utilized in recent research concentrated on branding and visual merchandising using a variety of narrative techniques. However, there must be a certain approach that successfully builds an active bridge between the audience and the knowledge in order to present instructive material, such as history. Research is still being done on the design approach that improved audience participation in creating instructional exhibitions.

2. Lucy Thornett & Greer Crawley (2022), in their paper titled “*Staged: scenographic strategies in contemporary exhibition design*” highlight that the collected pieces articulate a set of scenographic tactics within exhibition and display contexts, and we have recognized certain emerging patterns in their expression. The idea of “staging” as a method that heightens or amplifies and calls attention to the display’s actual conditions is one of them. This style uses exaggeration to highlight the exhibition’s context rather than trying to make exhibition venues and displays invisible or minimal in order to draw attention to the artifacts on display.

3. Sven Mehzoud (2019), in the paper “Scenographic Exhibitions as Spaces of Encounter” focuses that the use of exhibition design techniques for the display and interaction with national, regional, and landscape narratives. An enlarged

scenographic exhibition approach is applied and discussed using the Interpretive Wonderings mapping project and exhibition as a case study.

4. Margaret Choi Kwan Lam (2013), in the paper titled “*Scenography as New Ideology in Contemporary Curating and the Notion of Staging in Exhibitions*” focuses that A noteworthy development in the exhibition scene is the observation of scenography, a modern creative staging technique that originated in the theater and has been increasingly influencing exhibition settings in recent years. The classic exhibitionary complex has been reformed by scenography, and as a result, there is now an unparalleled meeting point between scenography and modern curating, which further informs a fundamental ideological change.

Objective of the Study:

The main objectives of the study are-

1. To study the concepts of site, research, and scenography in contemporary art practices.
2. To highlight the role and significance of site, research, and scenography in shaping contemporary artistic expression.
3. To explore the influence of site, research, and scenography on contemporary art with particular reference to Nabajyoti Nagar near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra, Guwahati, Assam.

Research Questions:

1. What are the key concepts and characteristics of site, research, and scenography in contemporary art?
2. How do site, research, and scenography influence the process and presentation of contemporary art?
3. In what ways do site, research, and scenography shape contemporary artistic practices in Nabajyoti Nagar near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra, Guwahati, Assam?

Significance of the Study:

Although the specifics of the design approach will differ depending on the exhibition's environment, scenography has been considered as an alternative technique to creating exhibitions in the past. The goal of this study is to fill in the knowledge gap about how the scenography in a contemporary art strategy is influenced by the site's distinctiveness and the research setting. The context being referenced to is the critical examination of the place and study and how it relates to contemporary art. This will entail investigating the medium, sensory perceptions, and the interaction of spatial narratives. Furthermore, the study finds that, by democratizing artworks and enticing the public to observe them more critically and casually, scenography has developed into a tool for questioning authority, in contrast to the colonial setting of modern art.

Research Methodology:

The study work is based on on-location primary sources, investigation, and scenography related to modern art. The survey and data were collected on ***February 20, 2024, and February 21, 2024***, at the Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam, near the hill area. The vision of the paper is to focus the influence of site, research and scenography on contemporary art with a particular emphasis on Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam. Critical discourse analysis is used in this study to enable a close reading of a number of works within a particular theoretical framework (*Lucas, 2016*). This approach, which is a component of qualitative research, is predicated on the idea that cultural output reflects social environment. In an effort to understand specific phenomena, it looks at hidden facets of cultural phenomena. Additionally, critical discourse analysis is by its very nature multidisciplinary, problem-focused, and requires fieldwork studies in order to evaluate and theorize (*Wodak & Meyer, 2009*). This approach takes into account application in addition to analysis, interpretation, and justification (*Catalano & Waugh, 2021*).

Results and Discussion:

By the development of a site and research, artist can incorporate objects into performances and enhance the overall immersive experience.¹ Some issues may be explained by an innate connection between the emerging trend of creating exhibitions and the world's shift to an experience-based context. The first principle of effective experience staging is as economists B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore stated in the Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage². They subsequently clarified that this is 'prevalent in almost any industry and applies just as much to the museum world'³. In this way, the concept of staging now serves as the central metaphor of the new exhibitionary paradigm, which gives drama a new, central strategic role.⁴



Picture-1

Research was drawn to the hill's modest roadstop point because of its natural, geographical, and inventive identity, which allowed me to investigate art identity. It also highlights the locals and the lovely ambience of the place. The road's initial set of steps began with tree roadways. For its inhabitants, it also exalts the

water pipe connection. The image highlights a few homes in this neighbourhood or the top of the hill, where a public survey may be conducted for educational, artistic, and census-related reasons. The survey is used as a teaching tool to develop visual depth and a broader understanding of possibilities, highlighting the concept that anything can be possible in any situation. In art, perspective typically relates to how places or objects are represented in its dimensional works. In order to give the appearance of depth that is realistic, artists employ perspective techniques.⁵



Picture- 2

The image is comparable to the previous one, except it shows the household's one tiny road. With its bamboo plants, it also focuses natural beauty. One can examine a stunning painting from the image. A wonderful painting can be viewed from the viewpoint of an attractive natural environment. Bamboo painting, which can be recognized from the image, is among the most basic yet delicate painting techniques.⁶



Picture-3

The 100-year-old Shiv Temple, which is significant to this region, is shown in the first image at the top of the hill. The temple is basic but needs more development. There is another Shiv Mandir in this area that is twenty-five years old. The 100-year-old Shiv temple has a significant influence on the religious sphere when investigating the place and scenery in research.⁷



Picture-4

These individuals store water in their water tanks as a result of a water problem. As per the data collection, a large water supply project is slated to be established in Nabajyoti Nagar, which was formerly known as Milanjyoti Nagar, as per Assam Government initiative. The Guwahati public will benefit from the implementation of the water supply project. The water supply project that has been set up in this area demonstrates the growth of the local population.⁸



Picture-5

The photograph brings out the colour of the rolling terrain. The people who reside in the red area there lead happy lives. The area has been home to numerous valuable trees since before people moved here. The locals are really kind and cooperative, and as a researcher, I am pleased with the people who gave me photos and pertinent information.⁹



Picture-6

Individuals are highly cooperative in this area. The image depicts a girl carrying a young child. Some individuals are seen in the backdrop of the picture going about their daily activity. The other home members went about their regular business.¹⁰



Picture-7

The image centers on a little residential street. At the top of the road stands a hundred-year old Shiv temple. The atmosphere

is quite seductive in this place. People's lifestyles are incredibly comfortable in this area.¹¹



Picture-8

The locals constructed this lovely little road with extremely attractive steps. There are significant issues with the road's communication function. People encounter risky situations on wet days. It isn't easy to drive and bring a bike on the road.¹²



Picture-9

The photos illustrate Nabajyoti Nagar's location. No people present in this home when visited for data collection,

because they were going about their regular business. People have a facing water problem in daily life. Since visited this place to get data, communication could be more effective.¹³



Picture-10

The researcher is depicted in the photos taking data. A woman in Nabajyoti Nagar, where the researcher is collecting data, states that various communities reside here. The locals are unified and incredibly supportive of one another. The researcher gathered socioeconomic and religious data from this region. I would like to thank Juvaraj for taking the picture that I needed for my data gathering.¹⁴

Major Findings of the Study:

The major finding of the study are-

1. Scenography and research are very important in the world of contemporary art.
2. I have learned a great deal about Nabajyoti Nagar, which is close to Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, while conducting research.
3. The people are really helpful and have provided accurate information regarding their concerns and other difficulties.

4. The idea of democratizing display in this show extends beyond the idea of having the thing touchable and takes the form of how the object is exhibited as using specific method for this research to contemporary art.
5. To further understand the method and approaches employed in temporary exhibitions and how they are applied in various national museum contexts, more research is required.
6. Seek to learn more about the methodological strategies used to create the extended scenography.
7. Additional research is required to fully understand the concept of performative exhibition, including the creative process between the curator and designer, the investigation of the medium, and the spatial strategy employed to tell the story of the venue.

Conclusion:

The present study emphasizes the importance of site selection, research, and scenographic design in the development of contemporary art practices that actively engage viewers as participants rather than passive observers. By integrating spatial context with artistic investigation, the study demonstrates how scenography can function as an effective framework for constructing meaningful artistic environments. Through the application of scenographic approaches, the research identifies various techniques that contribute to the creation of immersive and interpretive exhibition spaces.

A significant aspect of this process involves understanding the relationship between furniture, artworks, and interior spatial elements, as these components collectively shape the atmosphere and narrative of the exhibition environment. The concept of dramaturgical space emerges through the reconstruction of spatial arrangements based on relevant narratives, enabling the exhibition space to communicate stories more effectively. By recreating living

spaces from photographic references and incorporating research-based contexts, the exhibition evokes emotional and nostalgic responses in accordance with the principle of conviviality, allowing viewers to recall and connect with the experience of site exploration.

Furthermore, the use of the *mise-en-scène* technique helps frame the environment and displayed objects from a particular visual perspective, thereby strengthening the narrative continuity across different thematic sections of the exhibition. This approach enhances the interpretive experience by guiding the audience's perception and engagement. Ultimately, the distinctiveness of scenography lies in its ability to transform exhibition spaces into dynamic environments that foster spatial interaction, narrative expression, and deeper audience engagement within contemporary art practice.

References:

1. Filed Survey dated 20.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
2. Filed Survey dated 20.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
3. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
4. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
5. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
6. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
7. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
8. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
9. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.

10. Filed Survey dated 21.02.2024 at Nabajyoti Nagar, near Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati, Assam.
11. Pine II, B. Joseph and Gilmore, James H., 'Museums and Authenticity', Museum News, May/June, (2007), pp.76-80,92-93, (p.76)
12., The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage, (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 1999), p.27
13., The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre and Every Business a Stage, (Boston: Harvard Business Press, 1999), p.164
14. Widyaevan, D.A. (2023). Staging the space: Scenography in exhibiton design. New Design Ideas, 7(3), 662-681

Author:

M.F.A. (Painting), Ph.D. (Visual Arts-AUS-Submitted),
Assistant Professor, Department of Fine Arts,
Dr. Anita Baruah Sarmah College of Education, Parukutty
Bhawan, & Visiting Faculty,
Department of Fine Arts, Geetanagar College (Kanya
Mahavidyalaya)

Paper Received: 17/01/2026 Paper Accepted: 27/01/2026
Paper Published: 12/03/2026

Structural Domination and Gendered Labour: The Case of Tea Garden Women in Colonial Assam

Dr. Gautam Das

Abstract

The tea industry of Assam plays a vital role in the State as well as in the national economy. The tea industry in Assam is also well-known throughout the world. The establishment of tea industry of Assam not only changed the existing demography of Assam but also the social history of its tea garden workers. With the establishment of tea garden in Assam, the tea companies were in great need of utilizing huge labour force for the growth of tea industries, which they could not manage locally. The indentured labour forces of tea gardens of Assam are now very important and integral part of the socio-economic life of Assam and also form the backbone of the Assamese Tea Industry. This paper mainly discusses how the colonial plantation system in Assam structured the lives of women workers through economic exploitation, gender inequality, and colonial domination, shaping their work, identities, and social positions. The study employs a qualitative methodology, drawing on archival research, historical records, and secondary literature to analyse labour patterns and social structures. The findings highlight how colonial policies and social hierarchies contributed to the marginalization of women in Assam's tea gardens.

Keywords: Colonial Assam; Tea Plantations; Gendered Labour; Tea Garden Women; Structural Domination; Plantation Economy

1. Introduction:

Assam emerged as a significant site for colonial capitalist production with the establishment of tea plantations in the nineteenth century. This shift transformed the local economy and significantly impacted social structures and labour dynamics in the region. The total area under the cultivation is accounting for more than half of the country's total area under tea. With the establishment of tea garden in Assam, the tea companies were in great need of utilizing huge labour force for the growth of tea industries, which they could not manage locally. These indentured labour forces of tea gardens of Assam are now very important and integral part of the socio-economic life of Assam and also form the backbone of the Assamese Tea Industry. According to the Assam Tea Welfare Board, there are currently 950 tea estates in Assam. Across these 950 tea estates, a total of 7,95,850 (seven lakh ninety-five thousand eight hundred and fifty) people are employed as labourers in the tea production process. Approximately 17 per cent of the workforce in Assam is engaged in the tea industry. Of this, nearly 50 per cent of the workers employed in the tea gardens are women. The tea garden workforce comprises various tribal communities, including Santhals, Oraons, Gonds, and Mundas, who were brought by the British from different regions of the country to work on the tea estates.

Generally, women are recruited in tea gardens primarily for leaf plucking. In addition to their participation in plantation activities, they also contribute significantly to household responsibilities. In the early period of tea plantation, recruitment was largely confined to male labourers, and women were not given preference, as the nature of work initially involved intensive physical labour. The recruitment of women increased progressively, particularly when the Sardari System was adopted. Under this

system, entire families, including women and children, were recruited to the tea garden. Consequently, in subsequent years, improvements in transportation and communication, the migration of women to Assam tea garden was increased in large scale.

Women formed a major part of the plantation workforce, especially in tea gardens. It is widely accepted that a woman labourer from a backward or marginalized community may exercise a limited degree of autonomy but does not enjoy a high social status in the wider society. Therefore, in addition to gender-based marginalization, factors such as caste, tribe, and class play a significant role in positioning tea garden women labourers as a marginalized group. They are also denied full membership in society due to gender-specific roles shaped by structural domination, particularly the traditional division of labour between men and women. These women workers experience a double burden, as they perform roles both within the household and in the tea gardens. They performed **both productive labour** (plucking tea, fieldwork) and **reproductive labour** (household work, childcare) without recognition or adequate pay.

The role of fraud and coercion in recruitment policies, along with the sexual exploitation of women and the emergence of new sexual economies, was evident in plantation operations. Working conditions were extremely harsh, as plantations were often located in areas exposed to wild animals and diseases such as malaria and kala-azar. Basic necessities such as housing, food, education, and recreation remained largely insecure. Consequently, the living conditions of tea garden workers were miserable and deplorable. In this context the paper seeks to understand how the forces of production, patriarchal norms, and socio-economic conditions shaped the exploitation of tea garden women in the history of Assam.

2. Objectives of the study:

a. To examine how patriarchal norms and colonial policies contributed to the exploitation and marginalization of tea garden women.

b. To understand the social and economic conditions of tea garden women, including sexual abuse, wage disparities, and living conditions that led to their hardships.

c. To understand how class, gender, and colonial power shaped the lives of women workers in colonial Assam.

3. Materials and Methods:

This paper is based on both secondary and primary sources. The secondary sources include printed books, journals, articles, newspapers, and magazines. Sources are also collected from NGO reports, special bulletins, and journals published by tea planters and companies. Primary sources are collected from archival materials, including travelers' accounts, gazetteers, and government reports from both the colonial period and contemporary Assam. In addition, data were collected through schedules from selected respondents. Apart from these case studies of select individuals have also been done to assess the status of tea garden women.

4. Results and Discussion:

4.1: Existing Literature on Tea Garden Women:

Feminist scholars argue that **ignoring women's experiences and relying on male-cantered frameworks reinforces their marginalization.** To understand society, we need to study power, gender, and social structures together, showing how patriarchy connects with class, caste, and colonial history. Extensive historiographical studies have been conducted on tea garden workers in Assam. However, most of these studies address aspects like health, education, social protection, sanitation, and modes of payment, issues concerning male domination, domestic violence, marriage systems, and the economic and social status of female workers have largely been neglected. The present study, however, seeks to address these gaps by focusing specifically on the female labourers of the tea gardens in Jorhat district, Assam.

In existing epistemological literature, there is extensive research on the exploitation of tea garden workers in general, and women in particular, which informs the context of the present paper. For instance, Prasenjit Choudhury's (1989) work *Asamar Chahbonua Aru Unoish Satikar Bidwat Samaj* provides a **historical analysis of tea garden society**, offering valuable context for understanding gendered inequalities, structural domination, and lived experiences of women workers. He argued that women in tea gardens have historically faced lower wages, limited representation in unions, restricted access to welfare, and patriarchal norms that constrain their political and social agency in the workplace. Studies show that although women often constitute a majority of the workforce, they have little representation in formal organizational and union leadership and struggle to have their voices heard in collective decision-making. **Piya Chatterjee's** (1995) article "*Secure this Excellent Class of Labour: Gender and Race in Labour Recruitment for British Indian Tea Plantations*" gives an idea about how **gender and race influenced the recruitment of workers** for tea plantations during British rule in India. She describes how **colonial recruiters and planters viewed women's bodies and gender roles** as making them especially suitable for tasks like plucking tea leaves. The belief of women's "nimble fingers" were better for picking leaves led to women being put into the **lowest paid and hardest jobs**, which helped maintain unfair **hierarchies and exploitation** within the plantation labour system. **Samita Sen's** article "*Questions of Consent: Women's Recruitment for Assam Tea Gardens, 1859–1900*" examines how women were recruited into Assam tea plantations in the late nineteenth century and questions whether this recruitment was truly voluntary. Sen argues that women's consent was limited by poverty, social inequality, and patriarchal control, making their recruitment a form of systemic exploitation rather than a free choice. The article shows that women were recruited to meet the labour needs of the colonial tea industry, as planters preferred women for tea plucking and for creating a stable,

family-based workforce. This demand encouraged deceptive and exploitative recruitment practices. M. Bhadra's (1992) work on "*Women Workers of Tea Plantations in India*" helps to understand the position of women workers in the tea plantation industry and how they face multiple forms of marginalization. The article shows that although women form a major part of the plantation workforce, they remain socially, economically, and politically disadvantaged. Bhadra argues that women workers are concentrated in low-paid, labour-intensive tasks such as tea plucking, while men usually occupy better-paid and supervisory roles. The article also discusses how women face poor living and working conditions and have limited access to healthcare, education, and maternity benefits. Rinju Rasaily's article "*Women's Labour in the Tea Sector: Changing Trajectories and Emerging Challenges*" examines the changing role of women workers in the tea industry and highlights the new challenges they face in a changing economic and social context. Rasaily argues that while there have been changes in labour laws, production systems, and market conditions, women workers have benefited very little from these developments. They remain concentrated in low-paid, casual, and physically demanding work such as tea plucking. The article also points out that increasing casualization, mechanization, and declining social welfare measures have further worsened women's job security and working conditions. Recent work of Rajesh Kalarivayil, Balaka Chattaraj and Smitha Sasidharan Nair (2024) "*Precarity of Place in the Global South: The Case of Tea Garden Workers in Assam*" deals with the **ongoing vulnerability and marginalization of tea garden workers in Assam** by focusing on how the **physical and social environment of tea estates produces a state of insecurity and limited freedom**. The authors argue that the **place where workers live and work isolated plantations with weak mobility and support structures deeply shapes their precarious conditions**. Bhattacharjee and Singh (2024), in their article *Challenges to Empowerment: Socio-Economic and Nutritional Disparities among Tea Estates'*

Reproductive Women Workers of Cachar District, Assam, examine the socio-economic conditions, health status, and nutritional challenges of women in tea estates and how these factors affect their empowerment. The study highlights that low income, heavy household responsibilities, and limited access to education and skill development reduce women's decision-making power within both household and community contexts, thereby undermining their overall empowerment. **Poonam Barhoi and Surbhi Dayal (2023)** examine the working lives of temporary Adivasi women employed in Indian tea gardens, focusing on the ways in which gender-based vulnerabilities were intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study points out that the plantation economy is sustained by the systematic use of lowest paid women's labour, yet it offers little recognition of women's specific needs within employment practices or welfare policies. As a result, female workers remain exposed to persistent economic hardship and social insecurity, conditions that became more evident during periods of disruption such as the pandemic. The authors underline that temporary women workers remain largely excluded from stable employment structures and effective social protection mechanisms.

However, little research has specifically addressed the **structural domination of women in the tea industry**. In this context, the present paper seeks to explore the **historical exploitation of tea garden women** by examining their **subjective experiences**, which have shaped their social position and identity within society. The paper highlights how gender, labour, and social hierarchies pushed to the state of marginalization of women in Assam's tea plantations.

5. Colonial Plantation System and Women Workers:

5.1: Tea Plantation in Assam

In 1823, tea was first discovered in Assam when Robert Bruce became aware of the existence of the tea plant through a Singpho chief. He requested the chief to provide him with tea plants and seeds. The first tea seed nursery was subsequently established

at Sadiya, on a char near the confluence of the Kundil and Brahmaputra rivers. However, the site proved unsuitable for large-scale cultivation, as it consisted of a shifting sandbank with only a thin layer of alluvial soil above a sandy substratum. In 1837, a new plantation was established at Chabua, which demonstrated considerable success. Robert Bruce continued his experiments across various regions of Assam, and in January 1839, the first consignment of tea produced in Assam was dispatched to London. By 1850, there was only a single tea estate encompassing 1,876 acres of cultivation. Following 1856, tea plantations began to be established throughout different parts of northeastern India.

5.2: Labour Recruitment Process and Tea Garden Women

The large-scale employment of women and children was a defining feature of tea plantations in Assam. The reliance on low-cost female and child labour, combined with the colonial objective of maintaining a stable workforce through generational continuity, led to a significant arrival of women migrants. Women comprised a substantial proportion of the workforce relative to men and fulfilled a dual role, contributing both to plantation production and to the reproduction and sustenance of the labour force.

The Assam tea plantations were the largest employers of migrant labour, recruiting tens of thousands of workers annually from the 1850s to 1947. These labourers, who migrated from distant regions, were placed under the complete authority of plantation managers, who controlled housing, subsidized rice distribution, access to recreational spaces, and the resolution of internal disputes. Non-compliance with labour contracts, particularly desertion, was regarded as the most serious offence. Plantation authorities made sustained efforts to prevent desertion. From the planters' perspective, it was considered natural that labourers who deserted or disobeyed orders should be punished through flogging. Flogging was not the only method used to discipline workers; physical beatings and the routine use of abusive language were common

practices in daily plantation life. Such measures were employed to enforce discipline and punish defiance of authority or the perceived shirking of work. The high levels of profit in the labour recruitment system strongly encouraged irregularities, fraud, and cheating, eventually leading to its criminalization. In some cases, recruitment was also carried out directly by garden authorities. Garden sardars were sent to recruiting districts to collect labourers.

5.3: Gender, Sexual Abuse, and the Plantation System

Recruitment of labour was one problem, but getting them to the Jorhat district of Assam was another. The recruited laborers were then sent to various tea plantations in inhumane conditions. Basic health and sanitation facilities were not provided to them. Unpopulated lands, predominantly comprising jungles and hilly terrains, were opened up by planters for cultivation. During this period, the journey from Calcutta to the Jorhat region of Assam, where tea plantations had been established, typically required six to ten weeks. In certain cases, recruits were transported by boat or steamer and were subsequently required to traverse 100–150 miles on foot from the point of embarkation to reach the plantations. In parallel, Indian writers such as Dwarkanath Ganguly and Ramkumar Vidyaratna documented the profound social and gendered dimensions of this exploitation. Their accounts portray the systematic subjugation of women tea garden workers by European planters and managers as a salient representation of both colonial domination and capitalist exploitation.

A number of contemporary reports highlighted the exploitation and abuse of women workers by European planters and colonial agents. One such case was recorded against Charles Webb, an agent of the Indian General Steam Navigation Company at Kakilamookh in the Jorhat subdivision of Assam. As noted by S. Sen, a batch of laborers arrived at Kakilamookh on Saturday, 12 April 1884. On the following day, one of the emigrants, Buddhan, lodged a complaint alleging that his wife, Shukurmoni, had been

sexually harassed by Webb during the previous night, and that Buddhan himself was assaulted when he attempted to intervene and protect her. Despite the seriousness of the complaint, the laborers were transferred on 13 April to the Hooloonguri tea garden near Mariani in Jorhat district. On 18 April, Shukurmoni died, underscoring the fatal consequences of gendered violence and the structural impunity enjoyed by colonial officials within the plantation labour regime. By highlighting the intersection of labor, gender, and power, these writings illuminate broader patterns of structural inequality within the plantation economy, demonstrating how economic imperatives were deeply intertwined with social hierarchies and patriarchal control.

5.4: Wage Inequality by Gender

The plantation industry was characterized by a distinct organization of work and a rigid hierarchy of staff. The entire workforce was broadly divided into two categories: garden labourers and staff. While office staff included both men and women, subordinate staff positions were occupied exclusively by men. Plantation workers were employed as daily wage laborers and were remunerated on a time-rate basis. Typically, workers were required to work eight hours a day for six days a week. Within this labor regime, male workers were considered suitable for physically demanding tasks such as hoeing, pruning, and digging, whereas female workers were perceived as weaker and were consequently assigned lighter forms of work. This gendered division of labor was further institutionalized through wage differentiation. For the first time, a systematic wage structure for tea plantation laborers was introduced under the Act of 1865, which fixed monthly wages at Rs. 5 for men, Rs. 4 for women, and Rs. 3 for children.

5.5: Gendered Power Relations in Plantation Society

During the colonial period, the tea garden functioned as a self-contained settlement with segregated spaces for workers and European managers. Within this closed plantation

society, managers exercised largely unchecked authority, often manifesting in physical violence against labourers and the sexual exploitation of women workers. Such abuses rarely faced resistance, reflecting the deeply unequal power relations of the plantation regime. This pervasive control highlights the multiple forms of domination imposed by estate authorities. As Hartmann (1981) argues, both household and wage labor are sites of women's exploitation—a reality vividly reflected in plantation women's subjection to patriarchal control at home and coercive power at work.

6. Conclusion:

This paper examines the historical subjectivity of tea garden women in Assam within the political economy of the tea industry, emphasizing the intersections of state power, patriarchal relations, and plantation capitalism. It argues that women's experiences have been shaped by enduring forms of social exclusion and structural marginalization, reinforced by plantation regimes that systematically constrained labor mobility and personal autonomy. Discrimination across both domestic and workplace spheres has produced overlapping forms of subordination, situating tea garden women at the nexus of gendered, economic, and institutional exploitation.

References:

1. Agarwalla, R. *Tea Garden women, issues of socio-economic status: A study on tea garden women of Assam. International Journal of Legal Science and Innovation*, 3(5), 27–30. 2021.
2. Bhadra Mita, *Women Workers of Tea Plantations in India*, Heritage Publishers, New Delhi, 1992.

3. Chakravorti, R. N. (1997). *Socio-economic development of plantation workers in North East India*. N. L. Publishers, 1997.
4. Choudhury, Asim. *Enclaves in a Peasant Society: Political Economy of Tea in Northern Bengal*. New Delhi, 1995.
5. Choudhury, P. *Asamar chahbonua aru unoish satikar bidwat samaj* [In Assamese]. Guwahati, 1989.
6. Dasgupta, K. *Wastelands colonization policy and the settlement of ex-plantation labour in the Brahmaputra Valley* (Occasional Paper No. 82). Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, 1986.
7. Dhanaraju, V. (Ed.) *Voice of the other: Understanding marginal identity formation*. Gyaan Publishers, New Delhi. 2016.
8. Dutta, P. *Locating the historical past of the women tea workers of North Bengal*. Institute for Social and Economic Change. 2015.
9. Misra, S. R. *Tea industry in India*. British Publishing House, New Delhi, 1986.
10. Sen, Samita. *Women and Labour in Late Colonial India: The Bengal Jute Industry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
11. Sutradhar, Ruman. "What Caused Marginalization: A Study of the Tea Plantation Women of Cachar." *International Journal of Science and Research*, vol. 4, no. 5, May 2015.
12. Xaxa, V. *Economic dualism and structure of class: A study in plantation and peasant setting in North Bengal*. Cosmo Publishers, New Delhi. 1997.

Author:

Assistant Professor, Department of History,
C.K.B. College, Teok

Paper Received: 07/03/2026 Paper Accepted: 10/03/2026
Paper Published: 12/03/2026

Revisiting the Relevance of the Philosophy of Srimanta Sankardeva in the Contemporary World: A Historical, Cultural and Social Analysis

Guptajit Pathak

Abstract

The Indian state of Assam represents a rich cultural landscape where the principle of “unity in diversity” has historically shaped social harmony and collective identity. In this context, the contributions of Srimanta Sankardeva remain highly significant. Through the Neo-Vaishnava movement he initiated, Sankardeva sought to establish a more inclusive and integrated Assamese society. His philosophical vision emphasized bringing together people from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds onto a common religious, cultural, and social platform, thereby nurturing the values of unity, equality, and collective solidarity. This approach played an important role in shaping the moral and cultural foundations of Assamese society.

The intellectual and creative legacy of Sankardeva has contributed profoundly to the social, cultural, and spiritual development of Assam. His works including literary compositions, devotional practices, and artistic innovations provided direction and depth to the cultural life of the region while encouraging ethical values and communal harmony. By examining the central ideas embedded in his philosophical outlook and reformist initiatives, it becomes possible to understand their continuing relevance in

contemporary society. This paper therefore explores the enduring significance of the philosophy of Sankardeva in the modern world, particularly in relation to the overall progress, cultural identity, and social cohesion of modern Assamese society.

Keyword:

Srimanta Sankardeva, Neo-Vaishnavism, Assamese Culture, Religious Philosophy, Social Reform, Cultural Harmony, Contemporary Relevance

Introduction:

Human societies, cultures, and civilizations across the world are constantly evolving through dynamic historical processes. The experiences, knowledge, and cultural expressions generated through this development become valuable resources that shape the historical identity of a nation. For future generations, one of the most important responsibilities is to preserve and utilize this cultural heritage in ways that enable them to respond effectively to the challenges of the modern world. Ignoring the lessons of the past while focusing solely on present concerns may limit our understanding of complex social realities and weaken our ability to construct a stable and progressive future.

In order to build a secure and enlightened future, it is therefore essential to reflect on historical experiences and apply their lessons within contemporary contexts. Within the socio-religious history of India, Vaishnavism represents one of the most influential devotional traditions that have shaped religious thought and cultural practices for centuries. In the context of Assam, the role of Sankardeva was particularly significant in transforming and revitalizing this tradition. As a Neo-Vaishnava reformer, Sankardeva introduced a universal and inclusive form of devotion that provided a renewed interpretation of India's spiritual heritage. His philosophical outlook was deeply rooted in classical texts such as the Bhagavata Purana, the major Upanishads, and other Vedantic scriptures, which collectively influenced the theological foundation of Assamese Vaishnavism.

The Indian devotional movement has a long and rich historical tradition, emphasizing devotion (bhakti) as a path toward spiritual realization and social harmony. Within this broader movement, the Neo-Vaishnava tradition of Assam marked a significant historical development by establishing a devotional religious framework in the eastern region of India. Sankardeva's contributions were not limited to religious philosophy alone; his ideas were closely connected to the larger Vaishnava movement that spread across the Indian subcontinent and sought to promote equality, spiritual devotion, and cultural integration.

As a visionary thinker and reformer, Sankardeva occupies a prominent place in the history of Assam and India. His enduring influence is largely attributed to his progressive and reformative outlook, which challenged social divisions and promoted inclusive spiritual values. The Vaishnava movement established by him is commonly known as “Eka Sarana Harinama Dharma,” a devotional tradition centered on complete surrender and devotion to Lord Krishna as the supreme divine reality. Through this movement, Sankardeva contributed significantly to the religious, cultural, and social transformation of Assamese society, leaving a legacy that continues to remain relevant in the contemporary world.

Statement of the Research Problem:

The identity from Assam's medieval history is Saint Sankardeva. By following the same beliefs and ideas, he made a significant contribution to the Assamese society for the advancement of human and societal development. Because of this, Sankardeva's teachings are extremely valuable in today's world. Without his dynamic and insightful philosophical elements, a society is unable to exist in inter-peace harmony.

Review of Related Literature:

1. Dr. Bidyananda Borkakoty (2024), in his paper titled “*Educational Philosophy of Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankardeva and Its Relevance in the Globalisation Era*”

highlights that the Nava Vaishnava faith has a unique educational philosophy that is based on the active contemplation, life experience, and deeds of Sankardeva. The goal of the paper is to clarify Sankardeva's educational philosophy which was rooted in the Nava Vaishnava religion and its applicability today. Realist, naturalism, pragmatism, and idealism all had some influence on his worldview.

2. Rahul Amin (2023), in his paper titled "*The Contribution of the Srimanta Sankardeva to Educational Philosophy: A Comprehensive Study*" emphasises that it provides a comprehensive analysis of Sankardeva's educational philosophy, emphasising his emphasis on religious and spiritual understanding, social harmony, and cultural preservation.

3. Abul Hussain (2021), in his paper titled "*Contribution of Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva to Assamese Literature and Culture*" highlights that Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankardeva is the most revered name in Assam. He was a human god in the world and among the Assamese people. He was actually the most deserving son of God, yet some Assamese people still believe that he was an incarnation.

4. Rimjhim Chetia (2012), in the paper titled "*A Study On Influence of Srimanta Sankardeva in the Literary And Cultural Compositions Of Jyotiprasad Agarwala*" highlights that A major event that had a profound impact on Assam's religious history, socio-cultural structure, language and literary landscape occurred during the Middle Ages when Srimanta Sankardeva emerged in the religious, sociological, fine arts, and literary spheres.

Objective of the Study:

1. To examine the concept of "Eka-Sarana-Nama-Dharma" in relation to the socio-cultural contributions of Srimanta Sankardeva.

2. To analyze the role of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in promoting social reform and cultural revival in Assamese society.

3. To explore the socio-cultural significance of the Neo-Vaishnavite movement in shaping the identity of Assamese society.

4. To investigate the relevance of the philosophy and ideas of Sankardeva in the contemporary world.

Research Questions:

1. What is the concept of “Eka-Sarana-Nama-Dharma,” and how does it reflect the socio-cultural vision of Sankardeva?

2. How did the Neo-Vaishnavite movement contribute to social reform and cultural revival in Assamese society?

3. What role has the Neo-Vaishnavite movement played in shaping the socio-cultural identity of Assam?

4. How relevant are the philosophy and ideas of Sankardeva in today’s contemporary world?

Research Methodology:

The present study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Primary data have been collected through field-based approaches such as site exploration, personal observations, interviews, and photographic documentation. These methods have helped in gathering first-hand information related to the spatial context, cultural environment, and visual elements associated with the study area. Field visits and site investigations provided valuable insights into the practical and contextual aspects of the subject, while interviews with individuals associated with the site contributed to a deeper understanding of its cultural and social significance.

In addition to primary sources, a significant portion of the study relies on secondary data to strengthen the theoretical framework of the research. Relevant information has been collected from a wide range of academic and scholarly materials, including books, research papers, journal articles, periodicals, dissertations, theses, and magazines. These secondary sources have helped contextualize the study within existing scholarly discussions and

provided important conceptual and historical perspectives.

The research adopts a descriptive and analytical approach in order to interpret and present the collected data in a systematic manner. Through this method, the study examines and explains the relevant concepts, historical background, and socio-cultural dimensions associated with the research topic. By combining both primary observations and secondary literature, the research aims to provide a well-structured and methodical analysis that contributes to a deeper understanding of the subject under investigation.

Significance of the Study:

There is no denying the importance of Sankardeva's research as the doyen of Assamese and national life. Sankardeva, a representative of the Devotional Movement, brought Vaishnavism to the state during a time of the worst socio-political and theological circumstances. Despite being a subset of the devotional movement, Sankardeva's introduction of Vaishnavism added a new aspect to its inherent creative force. Sankardeva's relevance has grown not just because of devotion but also because of the development of a high standard of classical literature and culture and the acceptance of a liberal viewpoint.

Results and Discussion:

Sankardeva was influenced by the Pan Indian movement during his foot trip in Bharat. Thus, Sankardeva's Vaishnavism became characterised by egalitarianism and liberalism. Indian civilisation is based on gender and place of birth, and the caste system symbolises a person's identity. In the 15th and 16th centuries, Sankardeva propagated the Neo-Vaishnavite movement to promote a social renaissance in Assamese society, opposing the semi-feudalistic caste system. Sankardeva attempted to bring Assamese castes and creeds together under a common roof via the philosophy of humanism. He also moved the community closer to the highest spiritual and humanistic ideals that India had long

upheld. The idea of Universal Brotherhood was created by Sankardeva thanks to his outstanding achievements.

Every nation's true wealth is its people. This concept has led to the description of human development as a process that gives people greater opportunities and choices while also improving their well-being. The challenge of increasing a person's capacity to make important decisions in order to improve the quality of their life is addressed by human development.¹

During a certain point in human civilization's history, religion emerges and begins to influence societal structure and growth. It eventually formed the cornerstone of the formation of the authoritarian state system as it grew to be an essential component of modern human life as a social structure. Innovative philosophers, thinkers, and scientists were the religion's advocates and propagandists. The most curious minds in the country investigated their life. The social relevance of this human organization lasted and will always be historical significance, up until the start of a historical level rich in systematic study style.

At the highest level of an individual, the goals and objectives of holistic human development may include developing the skills and abilities necessary to protect a happy, healthy life. The breadth, depth, and significance of happiness may vary from person to person. One of the essential facets of human development is higher education, which promotes earning well and, in the end, results in the accomplishment of social goals. The other important spheres are appreciation from society, self-respect, and a sense of unity with a group or alliance.²

The development of modernism based on intellectual value and the scientific method came next. The development of the contemporary nation and state system led to the people's socio-cultural existence being restricted to the borders of the country. The connection between capital development and production underwent a profound shift as a result of the Industrial Revolution. A contemporary kind of religion with a workable set of laws and regulations evolved as a social reform as well. Likewise, over time,

various theological interpretations have also come to be recognized as legitimate forms of social representation. There are notable differences in the way religion is interpreted. Consequently, it is difficult to define religion in a way that everyone agrees upon. Nonetheless, the fundamental purpose of all religions is unquestionably to serve humanity.

Sankardeva used the institution of Namghar, which is regarded as the hub of the villagers' intellectual and cultural activity, to construct a new democratic order in order to accomplish his objective. He advocated focusing one's thoughts solely on reciting the name of God in order to realize truth and perceive God without the need for elaborate and costly worship.³

The village congregation hall, also known as the Kirtanghar or Namghar, is a hub for the villagers' intellectual, cultural, and spiritual pursuits and plays a significant part in preserving harmony and togetherness in Assamese society. Sankardeva attempted to bring justice, law, and harmony to the local community through this organization. The majority of Assamese villages have this institution. In certain locations, many castes came together to form a "Namghar."⁴

According to Sankardeva's teachings, the goal of worship is to enliven us, assist us in developing spiritually, bring about the manifestation of the Divine within us, and instill humanist impulses in hearts that lead to avenues of compassion and selflessness. Among the various people who were enmeshed in a maze of cults and beliefs that were overly reliant on rituals, Sankardeva spread the idea of Eka Sarana Nam Dharma, or total devotion to one supreme God. The most straightforward, liberal, tolerant, and straightforward method of achieving God was through Sankardeva's kind of religious worship, which was devoid of intricate rituals. With its philosophy, doctrines, rituals, and cult, Eka Sarana Nam Dharma, or the religion of taking refuge in one God, is exclusive to Assam and has a pan-Indian quality and character. Sankardeva's ability to organise was demonstrated by the manner he firmly established his religious beliefs in the face of the most

vehement criticism. Sankardeva lived in a turbulent sociopolitical environment at the time. The various political powers were at each other's throats. The archaic practice of offering animals and even humans as sacrifices to the mother goddess was common in the name of religion.

In the Bhagavata, Sankardeva wrote:

*“Satya Yuge Yena Phala Pavai Dhyana Kari
Maha Maha Yajne Treat Yuge Hari
Yena Phala Pavai Puja Kari Dwaparata
Pavai Save Phala Kaliyuge Kirtanata”*

[Bhaagavata, verse 413 in Canto 10]

[The benefit is received in the following ways: in the Satya Yuga, by meditation; in the Treta Yuga, through Jnagya; in the Dwapar Yuga, through puja; and in the Kali Yuga, only by chanting (Kirtana) the name of God].

Sankardeva said that one does not need to practice tapa (meditation), japa (concentration), yajna (sacrifice), or dana (gift) in order to approach God. Neither does one need to be an expert in every book in order to pray to God. All that is required to approach God is complete devotion to Him. These simple forms of prayer to God and the requirement of keeping one's heart pure are essential components that make society ethically acceptable.⁵

It suggests that God is present in all living things. We should therefore consider every individual to be divine. The wellspring of all problem solutions is God. Anywhere they give up their pride, at any time, and in any circumstance, they can achieve God.⁶

Sankardeva wrote a Borgeet—

*“yata jiva jangama kita patangama
aga naga jaga teri kaya |
sabakahu mari purata ohi udara
nahi karatu bhuta daya ||
isa svarupe Hari sava ghate boithaha
yoicana gagana biyapi18 |
nindabada poisunya himsa Hari*

*teri karo ho hamu papi ||
kaku Sankara kaya karahu karuna natha
yo no charo hu Rama bani |
sava aparadhaka badhaka tuva Nama
tahe sarana lehu jani” ||*

[Gita-4, Tera-raga : dhanasri]

[How may I show devotion to Thee, O Narayana? Oh Madhava, my evil thinking never stops becoming murderous and never stops being nasty.]

It suggests that everyone turns to God in difficult circumstances and ignores him in joyful ones. But if they started looking for God even in their good times, there wouldn't be a word for suffering.⁷

Although it was a component of the broader all-India Bhakti Movement, the Sankardeva-led Neo-Vaisnavite Movement in Assam occurred in a unique socio-historical context. Consequently, the pan-Indian Movement cannot be satisfactorily explained by applying the same general concepts to this occurrence in order to find the material clue.⁸

The list of names of impure people that Sankardeva originally included in his verse adaptation of the Bhagavata Purana has been updated to include the tribes that are currently living in Assam, including the Kiratas, Kacharis, Khacis, Garos, Miris, Yavanas, Kankas, Goalas, Asamas, Maluks, Rajkas, Turukas, Kuvacas, Mlechas, and Candalas. There was a notable literary and cultural revival in Assam. Through literature, art, music, and theater, both saints made a concerted effort to spread the new moral and religious message. A golden period of literature and culture was therefore brought about by them.⁹

Sankardeva gave special attention to the ethical aspects of religion in his writings because morality and religion are intertwined. These moral attributes certainly affected the behavior of moral people, but they also greatly improved social interactions, sociability, and friendliness.¹⁰

Srimanta Sankardeva is a remarkable person who welcomed religious diversity with an open mind. Sankardeva came to the realization that reawakening one's inner spirituality is the most basic form of devotion. In the banner of Bhakti Dharma, Namghar and Thana were established to bring the community together. Every ethnic group is developing a distinct sense of who they are. Sankardeva believed that religious harmony contributes to societal harmony and reconciliation. He preached 'Eka-sarana Harinaama Dharma' for this reason. The tenets of Sankardeva's teaching include morality, nonviolence, social service, spirituality, justice, inter-peace harmony, social development, economic development, and the abolition of untouchability.

The intellectual community must spread Sankardeva's priceless ideas in the contemporary world. Religion is a satire on feudal thought, yet we must accept the times in which it exists. Since then, anti-corruption campaigners' speech has undergone a cultural makeover and been acknowledged as historical truth. Through the spread of Sankardeva's Vaishnavism, which established the unity of all communities, he dedicated his life to creating a flourishing larger Assam. His religious beliefs were predicated on the creation of a broad society devoid of social classes, such as Brahmins and Chandals, in order to foster national consciousness and togetherness.

Sankardeva taught humanity to reject materialist beliefs. The illusion of happiness is the pursuit of happiness and the intoxication of life. This Vaishnava devotional movement offered the Indian people's religious and social life a new lease on life with the core principles that there is a great deal of complexity, a great deal of adherence to the laws of freedom, and a great deal of conformity to the rules and regulations.

It is evident from all of his writings that his views concealed the triumph of humanism. His ambition was to create human ideals that would bring harmony and serenity to society. In order to end caste prejudice and create a sense of untouchability, non-exploitation, and cosmopolitanism, he brought the masses together

via religion. He decided to spread the faith through sculpture, painting, music, and building. Among the most prominent manifestations of his culture are the Borgeet and Ankia Nat. Everyone participating in the Namghar and Satriya systems agreed with his ideas. He was well aware that religion and culture have always had a special place in humanism, and always will.

The basic, non-violent ideas of the Gurus aimed to awaken a feeling of cosmopolitanism, equality, and humanity. However, a closer glance reveals that society is beset with a wide range of issues. This is primarily due to inhumanity. It seems as though religion has regrouped in today's society, with various religions and conventions attempting to undermine social cohesion.

Major Findings of the Study:

The major findings of the study are-

1. Srimanta Sankardeva was more than just a religious figure. He was a worldly man, a philosopher, a sociologist, a theorist, a writer, poet, lyricist, composer, playwright, singer, and musician.

2. Sankardeva was a versatile player with a wealth of skills. At that time, Assam was greatly impacted by the neo-Vaishnava religious movement that swept across India in the fourteenth and fifteenth CE.

3. Sankardeva was an identity being with a wide range of unique skills. Without a doubt, consciousness and effort will shift towards all factors related to people's well-being.

4. The lack of unity among the numerous ethnic groups and communities, including the Kochs, Kasharis, Chutias, and Ahoms, had left the social and political realms in disorder. By subduing Assamese society, Sankardeva discovered the correct course at this pivotal point in the history of the country.

5. Through the restoration of its religious and cultural values, Assamese society was revitalised by Sankardeva's Neo-Vaishnavite movement.

6. Regardless of caste or creed, Sankardeva's teachings supported equality and the well-being of the general populace. He created the Eka Sharana, a religious system that allowed everyone to practise their faith, including Muslims, tribal people, and Shudras.

7. Bhakti theory places a strong emphasis on democratic ideals like equality, togetherness, and fraternity. It also highlights the need of embracing virtues like peace, love, and affection.

8. Sankardev was an outstanding scholar and a master of literacy. 'Kirtan Ghosa', 'Gunamala', and other works are his leading literacy creations.

9. Sankardeva was adamantly against the caste discrimination policy. He therefore accepted everyone equally and conveyed it in his novels.

10. Sankardev advocated a distinct way of thinking. His ideas were consistent with the Bhagavata's teachings on the Upanishadic concept of enlightenment via self-knowledge and unadulterated devotion to the Almighty God.

Conclusion:

The life and contributions of Sankardeva occupy a central place in the socio-cultural history of Assam. As a religious reformer, philosopher, and cultural visionary, Sankardeva played a crucial role in shaping the spiritual and social consciousness of Assamese society. Through his Neo-Vaishnava movement, he introduced a devotional path centered on Krishna-Bhakti that emphasized equality, collective harmony, and moral discipline. His efforts were not limited to religious reform alone; rather, they extended into various cultural and artistic domains, which enabled his ideas to reach a wider section of society. The creative expressions found in his literary compositions, music, dramatic performances, and artistic innovations demonstrate how deeply his spiritual philosophy was intertwined with aesthetic and cultural practices.

The creative energy of Sankardeva is clearly reflected in his diverse artistic and literary works, which were designed not only to communicate religious teachings but also to cultivate social

unity and cultural awareness. His compositions and performances became effective mediums for disseminating the ideals of devotion, ethical living, and community participation. The accounts of his disciples and followers further highlight how his understanding of art was closely connected with his spiritual vision. For Sankardeva, art was not merely a form of aesthetic expression; it was a powerful communicative tool that helped convey philosophical ideas and spiritual values in an accessible and engaging manner.

Another significant dimension of Sankardeva's contribution lies in his ability to integrate communication, creativity, and spirituality within a single framework. Through music, literature, theatre, and visual expressions, he developed innovative methods to reach diverse communities and convey the message of unity and devotion. His philosophical outlook consistently emphasized the need to bring people from different social and ethnic backgrounds together under a common spiritual and cultural platform. By promoting the principles of devotion, equality, and collective participation, he sought to overcome social divisions and establish a more harmonious society.

Sankardeva's artistic and cultural initiatives were deeply motivated by a concern for the overall well-being and development of society. His activities encouraged moral discipline, social cooperation, and cultural creativity among the people. Through institutions such as devotional gatherings and artistic performances, he created spaces where individuals could participate collectively in spiritual and cultural life. These initiatives not only strengthened religious consciousness but also contributed to the improvement of social relationships, livelihoods, and community values.

The enduring legacy of Sankardeva lies in his unique ability to combine spiritual philosophy with artistic creativity and social reform. His contributions continue to influence the cultural identity and moral foundations of Assamese society even in the contemporary period. By promoting devotion, unity, and cultural expression, Sankardeva established a framework that transcended religious boundaries and encouraged social harmony. His ideas

and artistic endeavors therefore remain highly relevant today, offering valuable insights for building a more inclusive, culturally enriched, and spiritually grounded society.

Glossary of Terms:

<i>Ankiya Nat</i> :	<i>The Drama organised by the Vaishnava cult of Assam.</i>
<i>Assamese</i> :	<i>Language or people of Assam</i>
<i>Borgeet</i> :	<i>The devotional songs of Assam</i>
<i>Ek-Sarana-</i> :	<i>The name of the ultimate entity i.e. lord Krishna</i>
<i>Nama-Dharma</i> :	<i>Complete surrender of oneself to the Almighty or to one God</i>
<i>Naamghar</i> :	<i>The Community prayer hall in Assam</i>
<i>Sattra</i> :	<i>The Vaishnavite Monastery in Assam</i>

References:

1. Barman. S, (2021), *Rachana Sambhar, Srimanta Sankardeva Aru Sankarottar Yug*, p.460
2. Bhuyan, A. (2007), *Socio-cultural and Political Role of the Naamghar, Towards Freedom, Kolkata*, Pg-31
3. Chaliha, B. P. (2011), *Sankardeva's Literary Contributions: A Short Survey*. In Barua, J., Nath, J. Das, K. and Bora, S. C. (Ed.) (2011). *Srimanta Sankardeva and His Philosophy*. P. 33.
4. Chaliha, B. P. (ed. 1998), *Sankardeva Studies in Culture, Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Nagaon*, Pg- 132.
5. Das, S. S. (ed.) (1985). *Kabir Granthavali Satik, V. 337*. P.92.

6. Jijnasu, L. D. (2001).1008 Kabir Bani Satya Jnanamrit. V.52, P. 116.
7. Maboloc, C.R. (2008), The Concept of Human Development: A Comparative Study of Amartya
8. Palit, P.K. (2010), Human Development and Early Indian Thoughts as cited in Sengupta 9. K.(ed.),Human Development multi-dimensional approaches to human well-being, New Delhi: Mittal Publications, pp. 191-200.
10. Pushpapal, S. (1988). Kabir Granthavali Satik. P. 80, V. 9.
11. Rao, V.V., (1967), A Hundred Years of Local Self Government, Bani Prakashan Mandir, Guwahati, Pg-26.
12. Sen and Martha Nussbaum (Master's Thesis in Applied Ethics), CTE, p. 14.

Author:
Assistant Professor & Head,
Department of History,
Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Geetanagar,

Paper Received: 18/02/2026 Paper Accepted: 27/03/2026
Paper Published: 12/03/2026

The Conceptual Inference of Womanhood since the Ancient to the Modern in Indian Knowledge System: A Synoptic Overview

Dr. Bikash Nath

Abstract:

The concept of womanhood as the distinct social category with its long records of bearing the acute crisis to its identity in terms of witnessing the long tradition of darkening the independent base of women's standard of living. It was not that during the ancient period of Indian history, the role of women had been substantially reduced to the position of non-materiality in the discourse of civilization itself which could mean a systematic dissemination of a thought about the philosophy of progress and its cultural roots of transition has been moulded in such a way that the meaning of womanhood was denied to have had any place within that broad systematization of the categorical imperative of knowledge as systemic force. The contention that the women's position had been weakened during the march of the civilization would point towards the fact that the relative significance of different branches of knowledge has no meaning if there is a deferral of providing any notional freedom in the sense of enlightening the marginalized idealism of being women. So, in that sense of marginalization where the discursive practices of the world of the women had been twisted into a different realm of ruling from the above and when the context of entitling the livelihood of the women with the defined forms of rights were withhold indefinitely there the conditions of humanity

suffered from the multiple discrepancies .The point was how to negotiate with the self of otherness that had been a great blockade in fulfilling the desire of mentality of the women’s selfhood. The essay would look into the difficulties in providing entitlement to the women in terms of production of a composite cultural complex due to the overwhelming preponderance of patriarchy and other hegemonic social entity.

Key words: Womanhood, identity, standard of living, civilization, knowledge, marginalization, rights etc.

Introduction:

Since the formation of the society as a whole with its consequent development in the structure of material evolution of property as well as the forms of social relations which got developed due to the gradual but definitive transformation in the production relation of a particular space. The systematic transition towards the private property and the formation of the boundary of the state eventually made it certain that the social division of labour would develop in the context of sustaining a continuous growth of the materialization of labour towards the making of the heterogeneous trends of production. With the greater differentiation formed in the context of human social ties based upon the identity of the classes had begun to place the position of the human bond on the perspective of gender as well as consolidation of the patriarchal basis of family structure within a given set of development of the conditions of living. It was not that the society was free from the turmoil of the inequalities in terms of entitlement to property and its participation in the production of knowledge system was highly limited in imagining the position of respectable sharing of rights with their male counterpart. The categorical subsistence of the womanhood had been discovered since the ancient period of Indian history as the lacuna of their self to represent the interests of their position in comparison to the patriarchal guardians of the society. There was a calculative denigration of the spirit of the women in joining ably in the process of production relation which would define

the rights of positioning their identity against any cross current of history .For example , during the early vedic period there was the prevalence of tribal chieftainship where a loose economic productive relation got developed which was not sufficient to contribute towards the segregation of the group identity of a settled folk based upon some specific social distinctions because of the weak organization of social relation . Of course , the women were exchanged as gift during the time of war when they were engaged as domestic slaves but they were given a slight form of right to join the narrative of production of knowledge system when it was conceded that ‘ Women could attend assemblies and offer sacrifices along with their husbands’ and at the same time we find a reference of composition of hymns by women (Sharma, 2014,pp.112-113). But in the later Vedic phase of ancient India, we find a deteriorating social position of the women when there was the great development in mode of production which contributed in developing the notion of caste within the larger hold of the Varna divided society.

1.2 Deterioration of the Position of Women:

There was the use of new techniques of production that helped in interpretation of the social complexities of human being based upon some specific social orientation where the ideas of self of the women had been conditioned within the paradigm of patriarchal formation of the society .The women and shudras were debarred from the ritual of upanayana and recitation of gayatri mantra thereby depriving the women and the lower order from the necessary ingredients of education (Sharma,2014,pp.124-125). Thus, the women were also excluded from joining in the *sabaha* and *samiti* since the ancient republican set up of governance had already given away to the monarchical system of rule which sealed the right of women also in terms of participation in the overall governance of the state.

The contention of the eminent historian A. S. Altekar was that ‘the position of women was fairly satisfactory in the Vedic age. Ordinarily girls were no doubt less welcome than boys, but

we must add that there were also some parents in society who would perform special religious rituals for the good luck of getting learned and capable daughters. Girls were educated like boys and had to pass through a period of *brahmacarya*. Many of them used to become distinguished poetesses, and the poems of some of them have been honoured by their inclusion in the canonical literature. The marriages of girls used to take place at a fairly advanced stage, the normal time being the age of 16 or 17. Educated brides of this age had naturally an effective voice in the selection of their partners in life.... There was no seclusion of women; they used to move freely in society, often even in the company of their lovers' (Altekar, 2015, p. 51). Where there was no definite form of a state and specific apparatus and the distinction into tribe was widely prevalent thus also indicating a loose formation of the social whole there exists very few chances of categorizing differently the interests of the men into a particular gendered perspective. But the process had already started when the family was headed by the father even within the large family unit (*kula*) there the evocation of hymns were composed only for the birth of a son and 'people prayed to the gods for brave sons to fight the wars. In the Rig Veda no desire is expressed for daughters' (Sharma, 2014, p. 112). There was the apparent stability in the social everydayness but there was the systematic adulation towards the patriarchal cultural mobility too which in turn ensured the continuous powerful abstraction of the reality in the form of various rituals to be performed before the divinity chanting the name of the male gods. Although, the scene of being women has been venerated in a 'romanticized' form but that positioning was deeply flawed one if we go back to the 'realistic view' which suggests 'varied conditions, especially when the mores of the clan gave to the norms of the caste. The participation of wives was required in many rituals but it carried little authority' (Thapar, 2015, p. 118). The basic reason of their gradual deterioration of their social status in comparative forms of material transition also pointed towards the fact that the rights of women over the ancestral property like the male counterpart had

not been recognized both in the early and later vedic phase of Indian history despite the great development in the science and logic of thoughts and learning .So, the exclusion of women from the property relation in a sense helped in segregation of the interests of the men from the marginalized reckoning of the position of women as sub-standard human revelation .

A. S. Altekar has particularly highlighted upon the eventual degradation of the position of women during the period of 500BC to 1500AD with the mentioning of two basic questions ‘There took place a continuous and gradual deterioration in the position of women as a whole during the next two thousand years (c.500BC to AD1500). How are we to explain this phenomenon? Usually we find that the condition of women improves as society advances to modern times .How is it that there is an exception in the case of the position of women in Hindu civilization?’ (Altekar,2015,p.53). His answer to this kind of deterioration is very interesting ‘The introduction of the non-Aryan wife into the Aryan household is the key to the general deterioration of the position of women, that gradually and imperceptibly started at 1000BC , and became quite marked in about 500 years’(Altekar,2015,p.56).It was the assimilation of the non-Aryan culture which was considered to be highly endemic to the social backwardness in the forms of uncivilized social practices and which was wanted to be controlled from the priestly class as unfit to stand in the religious ceremony with her Aryan husband .The non-Aryan social rituals gradually influenced the Aryan household for which the customs and traditional beliefs of the Hindu religion with their sole heritage of the Sanskritic cultural norms had been greatly harmed due to that uncivilized process of acculturation . If that was the real crux of the matter then it would be understood that the Brahmanical authority of the ancient Hindus to tackle the intrusion of the foreign elements into the orbit of the Vedic rituals and religion then it was a situation of offensive method of negating the being of the women in the garb of the rhetoric of non-Aryan cultural incursion.

The reality was something different from the causal observation of that form of penetration into the world of the Aryans. The fact was that the organized forms of social organization with consequent changes in the production relation based upon the division of labour where specialized craftsmen were created to develop the techniques of production with uses if new art of metallurgy that demanded a different social whole from the tribal foundation of the earlier period. The composition of the social relation which was grown up to the level of seclusion of the marginalized within the boundary of peripheral distinctions where the primary right over the property and right to representation in the border ideological apparatus of the state was denied to the women ,the allusion to the flow of non-Aryan thought was just a point of hidden umbrella over the unequal distribution of the resources based upon gendered division of labour. The root of that unequal status of women in the trajectory of ancient Indian social formation was differently formed is not the real answer to the question what Altekar paused in his analysis of the deterioration of the conditions of women in two thousand years .The problem was in unrecognition of the women's right to form their own opinion when the division of labour within the paradigm of caste was negotiated in such a way that the lower order primarily of the Shudras as well as the women had been categorized as not fit to represent themselves in the march of civilization .

1.3 Position of Women in the Discursive Practices of the Knowledge System:

The place of the women as one of the determinants of organizing the basis of knowledge system within the territory of the Indian cultural scenario was recognized up to the level of feminine aesthetics that would be quite innocuous in its appeal both inwardly and outwardly but not to be give the order of cognition in terms of location of their self in the spirit of reasonable strike with the civilization. So, if we consider the philosophical externalities of the Indian knowledge system there were innumerable paths of

identification of the spirit with the inward journey of the being in its totality of outward conduct and duties to represent in day-to-day deal of social -human affairs then we could see a form of outward social peace. But the atomistic segmentation of the social division of labour which was organized as the self-defensive measure to propagate the ideals of the Brahmanical principles of living which was infatuated with the logic of science and philosophy to the highest level of perfection where ironically the questioning of the spirit of the marginalized with the phenomenology obstruction of the language of the caste .The division of labour into the caste system was not only a process of social exclusion but it was the philosophical intervention in the process of ongoing harmonization of the self and its scrutiny of nature both organic and inorganic senses of human realization of the world . There was a spatial detribalization at the same time of cognition of the essence of the caste system but there was the agenda of consideration of turning the inorganic bodily attributes into the organic simulation of the spirit where the body would be the silent spectator in the overall transgression of the self to its otherness.

1.4 The Self of the Women in Dilemma:

The otherness of the self of the women was posited against the frivolity of the other order of the Shudras and in the overall transition towards the social functioning of the will that was formed in due recognition of the rights of the patriarchy in terms of their right to represent through definite property relation . The process of social exclusion of the lower order as well as the women were started with the ‘gendering of caste’ and the derecognition of the labour power of the workers and if any member from the lower order dared to violate the norms of the Brahmanical rites then he would be severely punished . When the vital role of the skilled labourer made it possible for the upper classes of the society to live comfortably ,there was process of dehumanizing the skill of those labourers ‘these very skills and knowledges were denigrated as inferior and polluting , as compared to the ritual , intellectual

activity of the upper classes' (Chakravarti,2018,p.16).In fact ,the endogamous marriage principles were looked upon the sacred responsibility of a couple to expect for true liberation of the soul which actually meant the gradual strengthening of the hierarchical social relation based upon the caste (Chakravarti,2018,p.29). Where there had been making of the routes of transition from the tribal-communal form of property relation with low progress in the form of determining the exactly focused production relation ,there the conjugal rights over the process of formation of the knowledge system was recognized up to a degree of freedom and justice to the position of the lower order but in due course of time ,the relationship among the men were justified from the vantage point of power to codify the systematic space of knowledge with various kinds of prerogatives of righting the wrongs for the purpose of privileging the powerful. In fact , the genesis of private property relation and the concomitant growth of the organized form of a state structure symbolized in actuality 'the entrenchment of the institutions of private property and patrilineal family was, thus, largely responsible for women's subjection to male kin, and by the period of the later Smritis and Puranas they came to be regarded as chattel, that could be gifted , sold, pledged, or disposed of in any way by their male guardians' (Nath ,2009,p.78).

1.5 Women in the age of Empire and Golden Age:

During the period of empire formation also , there was no radical transformation of the conditions of the standard of living of the lower order particularly of the shudras and the women .Majority of the shudras were forced to work as hired labour and slaves where the law giver Manu played a great role in demarcating the boundary of reason to be a shudra with the principle of 'serving the upper *varnas*' (Jha,2013,p.130) .Severe punitive laws were preferred against the assertion of an individuality by the lower Shudras and if any person from the lower varna did the act of assault and other such crimes 'the very limb with which a man of a low caste hurt a member of the highest caste was to be cut off' and

in the act of insulting a person from the higher varna from the lower caste then the tongue of the convicted person had to be cut out' (Jha,2013,p.130).Likewise in the case of women ,a person from the higher varna could marry a girl from the lower order but in this context Patanjali has said that 'the dasi (maid servant) and vrishali (shudra woman) were meant for the pleasures of men of the upper classes' (Jha,2013,p.130). There was the fear of a kaliyuga dominated largely by the newly enlightened shudras and women where the sacred principles of the Brahmanical social norms seemed to meet its decline due to severe cultural strain on the orthodox social order .In order to protect the Brahmanical patriarchal structure ,it was thought more relevant in disinheritance of the women from the property right and the lowering of the age of marriage thus snatching away the freedom of chose of their own husbands .The social conditioning of the women had been bounded on the three ideas of dependence of the womanhood on three pillars of patriarchy 'as an unmarried girl a woman had to depend on her father, as a wife on her husband and as a widow on her son .She was, according to Manu , a seductress' (Jha,2013,p.131).The same ideas of subjection of women to the patriarchal interpretation of the social will had been continued in the golden period of Indian history which was the age of the Gupta dynasty and in fact there was the instance of the sati to be performed by upper classes women with due approval from the jurists.

1.6 Women in Medieval India:

It is undesirable to expect any drastic change in the existing conditions of women from the ancient to the medieval age of the Indian society and it has been observed by the perceptive historians like Satish Chandra "there was little change in the position of women in Hindu society .The old rules enjoining early marriage for girls , and the wife's obligation of service and devotion to the husband continued' and other rules developed around the 'practice of keeping women in seclusion and asking them to veil their faces in the presence of outsiders , that is, the practice of *purdah* , became

widespread among the upper class women' which in turn 'affected women adversely , and made them even more dependent on men' (Chandra,2020,p.132).The women's claim to inheritance during the medieval age was highly restricted and even among the lower classes if it was 'legally allowed ,were often disregarded' and in fact there was a tradition in Bengal where in death of a peasant or a stranger there was the rule of seizing his wife and daughters as chattel 'for the benefit of the royal fiscal administration , the jagirdar or the dominant zamindar of the area' (Habib,2009,p.162). During the medieval Indian society, the widow remarriage was prohibited among the upper caste and the dangerous practice of sati immolation had been common among the 'warrior-caste of Rajputs and corresponding ruling groups and other high castes' which had been practiced 'two or three times a week at the capital, Agra, during the late years of Jahangir' (Habib,2009, pp.163-164). Most of the women were illiterate except the case of royal ladies like Gulbadan Begum, the sister of Humayun. Thus, the medieval Indian society and the knowledge system as a whole was not cognizant of the deplorable state of the women's world due to their means of immersed in the methods of disinheriting the women their world of rights whether in terms of education or right to hold property or moving freely in the streets and markets , restrictions upon widow remarriage , sati or burning of the widow at her husband's funeral pyre . seclusion of the women through the use of purdah all such social ills were sufficed to be categorizes as quite detrimental to the interests of the women.

1.7 Women in Colonial India:

The question of the Indian women in the colonial period had suddenly become a vital subject matter of initiation of the modernity as the soft form of internalization of the forces of colonial rule and its ideological apparatus in order to stabilize the rule of the colonialists over the conquered colonized. It was also a great form of utilitarian philosophical essentialities which demanded for instance in the writings of James Mill a presupposed formula about the

conditions of the Hindu women ‘Among the rude people, the women are generally degraded ;among civilized people they are exalted’ and again he was highlighting the broad understanding that ‘the condition of the weaker sex is gradually improved , till they associate on equal terms with the men , and occupy the place of voluntary and useful coadjutors’ with the conclusion that ‘nothing can exceed the habitual contempt which the Hindus entertain for their women... They are held ,accordingly , in extreme degradation’ (Mill ,1968, as cited in Forbes, 2018,p.13). The Indian response to the issues of modernization enthused them to rehabilitate the new web of change brought out through the paradigm of colonial society and economy in the homely practices of their own cultural space . It was not that they were quite in disagreement with the colonial social change within the structure of the Indian society but they were more conscious of indigenous transgression of the modernity to suit their own specific class interests beyond the controlling authority of the colonialists. That starting point of argumentation of social change had been sought to be inaugurated with a modern look to the previous traditional beliefs about the context of womanhood and thus the gender relations developed with ‘an amalgam of new foreign ideas, indigenous concepts , and the response of Indian men and women to the foreign presence in their midst’ (Forbes, 2018,p.14). Of course , the ideological groundwork of reforms had been made due to the efforts made by the ‘ privileged, male, upper-caste, middle –class intelligentsia, compromised with colonial governance’ as the symptoms of their ‘signs of guilty and self-critical introspection’ but they ‘took huge and painful social risks’ (Sarkar&Sarkar,2017,p.9). It was not that the reformers were too radical in their all personal affairs and if we take into account the context of Raja Rammohun Roy then we could see that ‘his personal relationships with women were far from ideal. He was married three times, at age nine, ten and twenty-one years. His first wife died soon after the marriage , another died in 1826 and one outlived him. There is no evidence that he looked to his wives for companionship; in fact ,there were rumours that

his adopted son Rajaram was the child of his Muslim mistress' (Forbes, 2018, p. 10). But in spite of his duality in his traditional nuances and hallucination towards the claims of modernity by creating a class of informed citizens about their positions, there was the attempt of going through the new realm of power with the modality of social reforms in the shape of strengthening the weak position of the marginalized like the women. The nationalist perspective on the other hand tried to put adherence to the logic of western forms of modernity to a level of selective aspects of imitation and derivatives of the few vital elements from the material civilization of the west but their project was in favouring the ontology of the spiritual thoughts of the east more as a mode of homogenizing the impacts of the west to give it a form of homecoming (Chatterjee, 2003, p. 312). So, in a sense the conditions of the women had not witnessed any radical departure from the earlier family relations in terms of their role as devoted to their social responsibilities as wives or daughters and in fact the joining of the middle class women in the national movement under the leadership of Gandhiji was not a sharp break from the past. The attraction of the women towards Gandhi's appeal in their service to the nation as religious duty as well as the painting of the 'image of women satyagrahis' which did not violate 'the feminine behaviour' and that was the reason of permitting their women to join in the safe leadership of Gandhiji. Their public role as women nationalists had been 'an extension of their domestic role' (Bandopadhyay, 2017, p. 391) which secured the Indian society from the apex point of revolutionary transformation.

Conclusion:

The context of the evolution of the womanhood has proved one point very much clear that in the discourse of knowledge what matters most in provision of ample corpus of argumentation against the traditional hierarchical mode of social relations and interestingly we do find a clear moment of transcendence in the ancient India's philosophical texts like in the pragmatic ethics of Buddhism and

Jainism as well as in the Vaishnava social ethics. In fact, the materialist philosophical orientation also helped in a great way tackling the Brahmanical social authority and its power relations when there was the intense debate about the duties of human being in a more rational social praxis. The Indian knowledge system provided the scope to ventilate the grievances of the lower order since the demarcation of the time into ages where fundamental philosophical juxtaposition was created to suit the specific social mode of living and if we go through the text of Vaishnava saints then we could observe that the door of open mind was not closed for the shudras and women too. That was the unique standpoint and beauty of the Indian knowledge system too.

Reference:

1. Altekar, A.S.2015.The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization, in Roy, Kumkum(ed.). Women in Early Indian Societies. Manohar: New Delhi
2. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar.2017. From Plassey to Partition and After – A History of Modern India. Orient BlackSwan: Hyderabad
3. Chakravarti, Uma.2018. Gendering Caste-through a feminist lens . Sage: New Delhi
4. Chandra, Satish.2020. History of Medieval India. Orient BlackSwan: Hyderabad
5. Chatterjee, Partha. 2003.The Nationalist Resolution of the Women’s Question, in Sangari, Kumkum& Vaid, Sudesh(ed.). Recasting Women –Essays in Colonial History. Zubaan: New Delhi
6. Forbes, Geraldine.2018.Women in Modern India. Cambridge University Press: New Delhi
7. Habib, Irfan.2009. Medieval India –The Study of a Civilization. National Book Trust: New Delhi

8. Jha, D.N.2013.Ancient India –in Historical Outline. Manohar: New Delhi
9. Nath, Vijay. 2009.The Puranic World –Environment, Gender Ritual and Myth. Manohar: New Delhi
10. Sarkar, Sumit & Sarkar, Tanika.2017. (ed.) Women and Social Reform in Modern India. Permanent Black: Ranikhet
11. Sharma, R.S.2014.India’s Ancient Past. Oxford University Press: New Delhi
12. Thapar, Romila.2015. Early India –From the Origins to AD1300. Penguin Books: New Delhi

Author:
Assistant Professor,
Department of History,
C.K.B. College, Teok

Paper Received: 23/02/2026 Paper Accepted: 28/02/2026
Paper Published: 12/03/2026

Spiritual Education as a Preventive Measure Against Youth Extremism

Dr. Kauranga Borgohain

Abstract

Youth extremism remains a pressing global challenge with far-reaching social, political, and psychological ramifications. Traditional approaches to countering extremism have largely focused on law enforcement, deradicalization programs, and socioeconomic interventions. However, these strategies do not always address the deeper cognitive, moral, and existential needs of young people that can make them vulnerable to extremist ideologies. This article explores spiritual education—understood as the cultivation of inner values, purpose, self-reflection, and interconnectedness—as a preventive framework for mitigating youth extremism. Drawing on interdisciplinary theories from psychology, education, and philosophy, the article argues that spiritual education strengthens moral resilience, fosters critical self-awareness, and promotes empathy, which collectively reduce susceptibility to radical narratives. It highlights successful programs integrating spiritual principles in schools and community settings, examines the role of spiritual mentors and institutions, and outlines policy recommendations for educational systems. Finally, it presents challenges and future research directions for implementing spiritual education in diverse cultural contexts. The findings suggest that

spirituality—distinct from religious indoctrination—can play a transformative role in stabilizing youth mindsets and cultivating peaceful, socially responsible citizens.

Keywords:

Spiritual education, youth extremism, moral resilience, radicalization prevention, inner transformation, empathy, educational policy

Introduction

Youth extremism—defined as the adoption of radical beliefs that justify violence, exclusion, or disruption of societal norms—poses a serious threat to global peace and social cohesion. Extremist engagement among young people can stem from a variety of factors: socioeconomic inequality, political exclusion, identity crises, psychological vulnerabilities, and exposure to polarizing media (Borum, 2011; Horgan, 2008). While existing strategies such as surveillance, community policing, and rehabilitation programs target symptoms of extremism, they often overlook the internal value structures and moral deficits that propel youth toward violent ideologies.

Spiritual education—a form of learning that deepens self-awareness, moral reasoning, and a sense of interconnectedness—offers an alternative preventive lens that addresses cognitive and emotional vulnerabilities underlying extremist appeal. Unlike religious instruction, spiritual education focuses on universal values such as compassion, justice, inner peace, ethical clarity, and self-reflection (Miller, 2005). This article investigates whether such spiritual frameworks can strengthen youth resilience and reduce the risk of extremist involvement.

Conceptual Background

Understanding Youth Extremism: Youth extremism encompasses actions and beliefs that reject pluralism and endorse injustices for ideological goals (Neumann, 2013). Typical pathways into extremist thought include: Identity vacuum: young individuals

seeking meaning, belonging, and certainty are often drawn to ideologies offering purpose.

Perceived injustice: Real or perceived social injustice can trigger anger and a desire for radical action.

Peer influence and digital radicalization: Online communities and charismatic recruiters exploit emotional vulnerabilities. Traditional countermeasures emphasize socioeconomic reforms and counter-narratives but often fail to address underlying moral and existential catalysts.

Defining Spiritual Education:

Spiritual education is a multi-disciplinary educational approach that fosters:

Self-awareness: Understanding of internal motivations, fears, and aspirations.

Ethical reasoning: Ability to evaluate actions based on universal values such as compassion, justice, and dignity.

Interconnectedness: Sense of belonging to humanity and the natural world.

Inner resilience: Capacity to handle frustration, uncertainty, and conflict non-violently (Krishna, 2016).

While religion can be part of spiritual education, it is neither necessary nor sufficient; spiritual education is inclusive, non-dogmatic, and applicable across cultures and belief systems.

Theoretical Linkages: Spiritual Education and Extremism Prevention

Psychological Resistance and Moral Fortitude: Extremist ideologies often appeal to emotional needs such as identity, empowerment, and certainty. Spiritual education combats these by:

Encouraging introspection: Helps youth understand core motivations and resist simplistic radical narratives.

Developing emotional regulation: Practices like mindfulness, meditation, and ethical deliberation build resilience against anger-driven decisions (Schwartz, 2015).

Strengthening moral agency: Youth with deeper moral grounding are less likely to justify violence even when feeling socially frustrated.

Empathy, Compassion, and Interconnectedness: Studies in social psychology affirm that empathy and perspective-taking reduce prejudice and hostility (Batson, 2011).

Spiritual education promotes:

Empathy building: Through contemplative exercises and service learning, youth become more attentive to others' suffering.

Value of non-violence: Emphasis on harmony rather than retribution disincentivizes extremist endorsement.

Broad identity frameworks: Encourages identification with global humanity rather than narrow tribalism.

Cognitive Resilience to Polarizing Narratives

Young minds are vulnerable to black-and-white thinking and absolutist claims common in extremist propaganda. Spiritual education fosters critical reasoning and tolerance for ambiguity, enabling youth to:

Question simplistic answers

Appreciate complexity in social issues

Resist emotionally charged rhetoric

Case Studies and Evidence

Mindfulness Programs in Schools: Educational initiatives in the United States and Europe have introduced mindfulness and contemplative practices in classrooms, showing: Reduced aggression

Improved attention and self-control

Greater empathetic behavior (Black & Fernando, 2014)

Although not exclusively designed for extremism prevention, these outcomes align with qualities that mitigate radical appeal.

Community Spiritual Centers and Youth Engagement:

In Malaysia and Indonesia, community centers offering spiritual mentoring combined with life-skills training have: Reduced youth participation in militant groups, Improved community

cohesion, fostered intercultural dialogue, Centers emphasize spirituality as inner strength and ethical living, not doctrinal adherence.

Religious vs. Spiritual Education: Different Outcomes

Programs narrowly tied to doctrinal preaching sometimes reinforce ingroup-outgroup separation, which can unintentionally backfire (Juergensmeyer, 2017). In contrast, secular spiritual education—focused on common humanity and values—avoids such pitfalls.

Implementing Spiritual Education in Formal Systems Curriculum Design Principles

Curricula must balance structure with flexibility:

Analytical reflection exercises

Moral dilemmas discussions

Introduction to global ethical traditions

Practices for emotional awareness and regulation

Examples:

Component

Objective

Journaling on values

Encourages self-reflection

Service learning

Builds empathy & civic responsibility

Ethical debate forums

Develops moral reasoning

Mindfulness practices

Enhances emotional resilience

Teacher Training and Faculty Development

Teachers must be trained to:

Facilitate reflection without imposing beliefs

Promote respectful dialogue
Recognize signs of frustration and distress
Integrate non-violent conflict resolution strategies
Including psychologists and spiritual mentors in teacher training enhances program effectiveness.

Community and Family Involvement:

Youth development is shaped by families and communities.

Programs must:

Engage parents with workshops on emotional communication

Support community projects rooted in service and values

Create inter-faith and intercultural exchange platforms

Challenges and Critiques

Misunderstanding Spiritual Education as Religious Indoctrination:

A key critique is conflating spiritual education with religious instruction. To avoid this:

Use universal values language

Preserve academic objectivity

Encourage diverse perspectives

Measuring Effectiveness:

Quantifying the impact of spiritual education on extremism is difficult due to:

Complexity of human motivations

Longitudinal nature of change

Interaction with other social factors

However, qualitative indicators—such as empathy scores or conflict resolution skills—can serve as proxies.

Cultural Sensitivities:

In multicultural societies, programs must respect:

Diverse belief systems

Socioeconomic contexts
Varied expressions of spirituality
Culturally sensitive adaptation is crucial.

Policy Recommendations

- Integrate Spiritual Education into National Curricula
Governments should pilot spiritual education modules in:
Secondary and higher secondary schools
Teacher education institutions
Vocational training centers
Curricula should be monitored and adapted based on feedback.

- Support Research and Evaluation
Fund longitudinal studies to:
Evaluate program outcomes
Test connections between spiritual education and reduced extremist tendencies

Identify best practices

- Foster Public-Private Partnerships

Collaboration among:

Educational institutions

Civil society organizations

Community spiritual centers

This expands reach and resource sharing.

Conclusion

Preventing youth extremism necessitates a holistic approach that transcends conventional security-oriented strategies. Spiritual education—when designed as an inclusive, value-centered, and reflective learning experience—can fortify inner resilience, ethical clarity, and empathetic understanding among young individuals. While challenges in implementation and measurement remain, the theoretical foundations and emerging evidence suggest that spiritual education holds promise as a preventive measure against extremist engagement. Educators, policymakers, and communities must

work in concert to create environments where youth can develop not only intellectually but morally and spiritually, fostering a future rooted in peace, justice, and mutual respect.

References:

1. Batson, C. D. (2011). *Altruism in Humans*. Oxford University Press.
2. Black, D. S., & Fernando, R. (2014). Mindfulness training and classroom behavior. *Journal of Child Development*, 85(1), 1–16.
3. Borum, R. (2011). Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories. *Journal of Strategic Security*.
4. Horgan, J. (2008). From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 618(1), 80–94.
5. Juergensmeyer, M. (2017). *Terror in the Mind of God*. University of California Press.
6. Krishna, S. (2016). *Spirituality and Social Reform*. Routledge.
7. Miller, J. P. (2005). Spirituality and Education: An Intricate Relationship. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 3(3), 236–256.
8. Neumann, P. (2013). The trouble with radicalization. *International Affairs*, 89(4), 873–893.
9. Schwartz, R. M. (2015). *Meditation and Emotional Regulation*. Psychology Today.

Author:
Assistant Professor,
Sibsagar Commerce College

Paper Received: 26/02/2026 Paper Accepted: 05/03/2026
Paper Published: 12/03/2026

Yoga : A Pathway to Sustainable Living

Mr Sanjib Phukan

Abstract

Yoga was the first system in history to recognize the bond between mind and body. The Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata, the Vedas and many other ancient scriptures mention yoga. 'Yoga Sutras' is the treatise written by Patanjali, one of the greatest purveyors of yoga. Yoga is a holistic approach to health and disease prevention and management as well as an art form and science that promotes holistic living. It is believed that yoga is the best and the simplest way to achieve health and wellbeing, which should be maintained on a daily basis for all individuals. Practicing yoga regularly for a long period of time can improve our mind, body and spirit as well as guide us toward a more fulfilled life. Yoga based education, values and culture have been inculcated as well as psychological well being is promoted, not only of individuals, but also of societies. A variety of techniques are used in yoga in order to unite the mind and body for the purpose of self realization. Yoga practice can alleviate suffering, leading to peace, harmony and freedom from suffering. From a psychological point of new yoga promotes emotional health, teaching awareness, acceptance and appreciation of one's own self and from philosophical perspective

yoga helps reach and maintain spiritual health by helping person locate himself along with other individuals and the world.

Yoga and sustainability are deeply connected with the yoga principles of mindfulness. Here sustainability involves the harmonious balance between human well-being and reflecting the yogic ideal of unifying the body, mind and spirit with the environment.

Keywords: Yoga, Well-being, Mental health, Sustainability etc.

Introduction:

Yoga derives from Sanskrit root yuj, which means to join, yoke or unite. Yoga creates a divine union between mind, body, and spirit. The book Yoga Sutra, Patanjali a sage in ancient India, described eight limbs of yoga where the physical practice is just the third limb. The other limbs are Yamas, Niyamas, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi. Each limb of yoga has its purpose and helps live life with more integrity, self-discipline, harmony, and respect for others and nature and connection to spiritual aspects of life. Yamas and Niyamas are ethical and personal guidelines for mindful and harmonious living. The yoga scriptures describe yoga as a method of connecting the individual with the universal. A quantum firmament is the manifestation of the entire universe, according to modern science. A yoga practice is intended to lead to holistic health, happiness, and harmony with the goal of overcoming all sorts of suffering. The first yogi, known as adiyogi, and the first guru, known as adiguru, is considered Shiva. The practice of yoga has become widely accepted as a preventative practice, a maintenance practice, and health promotion technique in today's society. In Ashtanga Yoga, the eight limbs are linked together to achieve the state of yoga, also known as Samadhi. In yoga, yamas and niyamas are asanas, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhyaya.

Many studies have shown that yoga is beneficial to mental health, and a few of them. A yoga session often results in deep

relaxation, calm, and happiness for people who exercise yoga. Yoga's effects have been seen to improve well-being and satisfaction with life. There are still many parts of yoga that remain to be discovered, despite the fact that yoga has so many positive effects.

Sustainable living is a way of living that aims to reduce the personal carbon footprint and minimise environmental damage. Yoga and sustainable living make a connection and seek to focus harmony within ourselves and the surroundings. Both the practices lie the idea of awareness and mindfulness. The concept of sustainable living points out the conscious awareness of actions and the impact on the inner and outer environment.

Literature Review :

Yoga can make an important contribution in achieving a healthy life and promoting well-being for all at a time when the world is striving to achieve sustainable development goals. Yoga's emphasis on mindfulness and interconnectedness cultivates a deeper connection to nature and a greater awareness of one's impact, leading to the adoption of more conscious and eco-friendly behaviors. By cultivating inner balance and well-being, yoga helps overcome the greed and apathy that drive unsustainable practices, positioning it as a holistic tool for promoting environmental and personal identity.

The concept of inner sustainability refers to psychological, emotional, and spiritual health that supports sustainable behaviour (Wamsler et al., 2018).

Methodology :

The research methodology is used in collecting the data for the researchers. It is a way to systematically solve the research problem. The aim of this methodology is therefore to fulfill the research plan and the research objectives set out by the researcher. Effective data collection ensures the accuracy, reliability, and validity of the research findings, making it a fundamental component of any research methodology. In order to

accomplish the purpose of this study and to conduct the investigation, data has been collected from secondary sources. Secondary data is information that has been collected, processed, and published by others. Researchers use secondary data to gain insights without having to gather the information themselves. This type of data can come from various sources such as books, academic journals, government reports, statistical databases, and historical records. The primary advantage of using secondary data is that it saves time and resources, as the data collection process has already been completed. Additionally, secondary data might be outdated or lack the depth required for certain types of analysis. Secondary data was collected from books, journals, research papers, websites, articles and news papers.

Yoga's Philosophical foundations for Sustainability :

Yoga as a holistic system encompassing physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, promotes a way of life that extends beyond physical postures to fostering a harmonious relationship with oneself and the environment. Ahimsa or non-violence promotes non-harming towards oneself, others, and the environment. Asteya or non-stealing discourages greed, craving, and unnecessary accumulation, encouraging the purchase of only essential goods. Aparigraha or non-hoarding teaches to take only what is needed, avoid excess, and to release what no longer serves, promoting a sharing economy and reducing waste. Brahmacharya or right use of energy focusses energy on inner development rather than external desires, promoting a balanced and less consumptive lifestyle.

Yoga practices cultivate mindfulness, heightening awareness of the interconnectedness of thought, energy, and action. This increased awareness helps individuals understand their relationship with others and the natural world. By promoting inner calm and contentment, yoga encourages individuals to find joy in simple experiences rather than material possessions. This shift in focus reduces the drive for excessive consumption. The yamas and

niyamas provide an ethical framework for daily life that inherently supports sustainable living. These principles guide individuals to live with integrity and compassion for all.

Significance of Yoga in Sustainable Living:

Yoga as the way of life provides valuable lessons for a sustainable living. Two aspects namely Yama and Niyamas restricts as the moral guidelines of individuals to be familiar with the nature of the world. Yama is the first limb of yoga and it is about vows, discipline, views, and practices focused on interaction with the rest of the world. The first discipline of restraint restricts non-injury, thoughtfulness in all thoughts and speech. The concept of non-injury is the direction of yoga philosophy. The application of Ahimsa could be practice in sustainability by choosing products that have been manufactured responsibly by sustainable brands with fair practices. Patanjali wrote about Satya as, "To one established in truthfulness, actions and their results become subservient." For the sustainable development with Satya yoga practices people could more easily realize that they have the capacity and time to try sustainable living. The truthfulness is the way for harmony between true thoughts and words in conformity with all creatures. Persons having truthfulness in mind could able to welfare of all creatures. Goodwill and kindness for all living beings is the outcome of it. Asteya means the non-stealing and refers to non-stealing physical possessions from others and avoiding greed and craving for unnecessary things. The application of asteya in sustainability may be seen in reducing overall consumption of goods and buying only those things that are needed. Brahmacharya teaches the right uses of energy. It focuses the distributing and using energy not to satisfy external desires and pleasures but towards the inner peace and happiness. Aparigraha is the key which teaches to take what it needed.

The cleanliness emphasises the need of cleanliness or unpolluted environment. This leads to a practices of organic farming and chemical free products which leads the human being to be a

part of sound ecosystem. So the practice of yoga promotes sustainable living through the environmental awareness. Breath control or pranayama consists in controlling natural breathing and subjecting to a definite law. It urges individuals to consider the quality of air and its impact on the atmosphere. In Westfall yoga, physical postures (asanas) are combined with breathing exercises (pranayama) and other classical elements, such as meditation and relaxation. An emphasis is placed on the body in this practice. In addition to its spiritual nature and fundamental philosophical and methodological framework, yoga is often underappreciated. Such habitual insights encourage the human eco-friendly and make the atmosphere free air pollution and clean energy drive.

Yoga's teachings are how to unite the mind, body, and soul. It teaches how to make healthy decisions that enhance life quality, individually and collectively. Yoga can bring inspiration to create a better world around and to make a meaningful and environmentally friendly life.

Conclusion:

Yoga is an intricate system of self improvement, offers profound teachings on sustainability and environmental responsibility through its ethical principles and breathing practices. By Yama and Niyamas and cultivating pranayama, individuals can gradually align their lives with sustainable practices, fostering a harmonious relationship with nature and safeguarding the planet for future generations. The integration of yoga and sustainable living offers a path to holistic well-being and environmental balance. By practicing mindfulness, embracing simplicity and fostering a deep connection with nature through yoga, so human can contribute to sustainable living. Yoga is not just a practice but a way of life, leading us towards a more sustainable and compassionate existence on earth. Yoga can make mindfulness, simplicity and a deep connection with nature so it is possible to contribute to a sustainable living. Human can contribute conserving resources and promoting ecological balance through sustainable living practices. A sustainable lifestyle is vital

for ensuring a balanced ,healthy,equitable world.It promotes environmental ,economic stability and social well-being,ultimately contributing to the longevity and quality of life.Renewable energy is the key to a sustainable future.Humans have the capacity to enhance personal well-being and contribute to a brighter future.

References:

Aurobindo S.The Upanishads:Texts,Translations and Commentaries Pondicherry,India:Advaita Ashram:1972.

Broad,W.J.(2012).The Science of Yoga: The Risks and the rewards.Simon and Schuster.

Bryant,E.F.(2009).The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali:A New Edition,Translation,and Commentary.North Point Press.

Carroll,C.(2020).Can Yoga Help Make the World a better Place?Perceptions from Adult Practitioners

Das SkailaHL,KushalKB.Holistic counselling for health and well-being Towards Development with Young People.2003 Mumbai,Indian Himalayan Publishing House.

Feuerstein, G., (2003) The deeper dimension of Yoga: Theory and Practice.

Shambhala Publications.

Frawley,D.(2014).Vedic yoga: The Path of the Rishi.Lotus Press.

Gard,T.,Holzel,B.K.,& Lazar,S.W.(2014).The potential effects of meditation on age-related cognitive decline:A systematic review.Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Author:

Assistant Professor

Lakhimpur Kendriya Mahavidyalaya

Environmental Sustainability in the Indian Knowledge System

Dr. Nirmali Doley

Abstract

Environmental sustainability is one of the key issues for modern global development. While modern environmental policy places much emphasis on the latest technologies and regulatory tools, ancient knowledge systems (IKS) hold the key to the principles of environmental balance, ethical responsibility, and symbiotic co-existence between human society and nature. Based on ancient texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Arthashastra, Manusmriti, and the epic Mahabharata, among other traditions, the IKS is a body of knowledge that is grounded on the principles of environmental sustainability. In this article, the author will seek to present the key concepts of environmental sustainability through the IKS and evaluate the philosophical underpinnings and practical applications thereof. It is submitted that an integrative examination of indigenous agricultural systems, forest management systems, sacred ecology, water management systems, and ethical economics reveals the true meaning of environmental sustainability. The author also proposes how the principles of the IKS may be utilized to enhance modern environmental governance systems and promote a more holistic concept of environmental sustainability.

Keywords

Indian Knowledge System, Environmental Sustainability, Ecological Ethics, Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Development

Introduction

Environmental sustainability can be described as the use and management of environmental resources in a way that ensures the well-being of the current and future generations. Even though the contemporary concept of sustainability was developed on the foundations of modern environmental and policy instruments developed in the 20th and 21st centuries, environmental awareness has been a key component of the ancient culture and tradition of many civilizations around the world. This is particularly true in the case of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). IKS is a set of ancient traditions and wisdom related to the governance and culture of ancient India.

IKS is a highly interdisciplinary concept. It combines elements of ethics, governance, spirituality, and environmental sciences. IKS is based on the idea of seeing humans as a part of nature and not apart from nature. This idea forms the core of sustainable development in IKS. Sustainable development is not an abstract concept in IKS; rather, it is an integral part of social life.

In this article, the concept of environmental sustainability, as enunciated in the Indian Knowledge System, is discussed, and the relevance of ancient practices to modern concepts of sustainability is highlighted. First, the philosophical underpinnings are discussed, followed by a discussion of practices related to the management of resources, forests, water, and agriculture, and then move to a discussion of contemporary relevance.

Philosophical Foundations of Sustainability in IKS

The concept of sustainability in the Indian Knowledge System has philosophical foundations that highlight the importance of interconnectedness, moderation, and respect for life. In the

Vedas, the concept of Rta, or cosmic order, refers to the idea of universal harmony that maintains all life forms (Gonda, 1963). This balance was critical for the prosperity of human societies and the environment.

I.Unity of Life and Cosmic Order

The Upanishads present a vision of a common essence that unifies all life, referred to as Brahman. This philosophical worldview dissuades people from adopting exploitative attitudes and attitudes that promote reverence for nature (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957). In the context of ethics, the preservation of the environment becomes a moral obligation.

II.Dharma and Ethical Ecology

Dharma does not only pertain to human relationships, but also includes the responsibilities of humans towards the natural environment. In this regard, human actions are not only judged based on the impact they have on other humans, but also based on the impact they have on the larger ecosystem of the environment (Srinivasan, 2002). In this way, the ethics of sustainability are set up as a guiding force for human actions.

III.Moderation (Mitahara) and Consumption Ethics

The ancient Indian teachings of moderation, especially regarding human consumption (mitahara), emphasize the negative effects of excess, which leads to imbalance and suffering (Bhattacharya, 2003). These teachings, among other things, promote sustainable use of resources, basing environmental ethics on the practices of daily life

Traditional Knowledge and Resource Management

Besides the philosophical aspects, IKS also comprises resource management practices that cover forests, water, land, and biodiversity. These practices have often been developed over centuries based on observation and adaptation to the local environment.

I.Forest Governance and Sacred Groves

Forests have been considered sacred in India and have been protected over time. Sacred groves (Devara Kadu, Kavus, Sarnas) are areas set aside for religious and cultural reasons. People have not exploited these areas for logging, hunting, or any other activity. These areas have become biodiversity and genetic resource havens (Gadgil & Vartak, 1983). These are examples of natural resource management that are consistent with sustainability.

II. Water Management Systems

Indigenous water management practices adopted by people in India include rainwater harvesting, tank irrigation, step wells or baolis, and pond management. Water management practices adopted by people living in the semi-arid regions of Rajasthan and Karnataka provide a clear example of the application of indigenous knowledge for the effective management of water resources (Biswas, 1970).

III. Biodiversity and Ethnoecological Knowledge

Traditional ecological knowledge refers to the extensive understanding of flora and fauna species, including the uses of the species and the seasonal patterns of the species. Indigenous people living in different ecological zones have adopted different practices for the conservation of seeds, sustainable harvesting of non-timber forest products, and habitat diversity (Posey, 1999). Seed exchange and conservation of different varieties of crops, also known as landraces, have contributed significantly towards biodiversity conservation, even before the development of the concept of genetic conservation.

Agriculture and Sustainable Practices

Agriculture is one of the main economic and cultural activities practiced in India for thousands of years. The concept of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) shows a deep understanding of ecological balance in agriculture. The traditional form of agriculture was practiced with the aim of avoiding soil degradation and promoting ecological stability. For example, mixed cropping and crop rotation were common practices among the farming

community. The farming community practiced crop rotation with the aim of maintaining soil fertility and avoiding the failure of crops without using chemical pesticides (Singh & Lal, 2011). Such practices not only preserved the fertility of the soil but also encouraged biodiversity in agricultural fields. Organic soil management is another key concept practiced traditionally. The use of natural resources such as cow dung, farmyard manure, and compost is a good example of how to enrich the fertility of the soil and promote the growth of good microbes in the soil. Preparations such as Jivamrit, a bio-fertilizer, show that the people of this region were aware of the biological aspects of the soil and, therefore, there was no need to use external chemical fertilizers to enrich the fertility of the soil (Bhattacharyya et al., 2015). In addition, this traditional agriculture was often accompanied by animal husbandry, forestry, and water management practices. This shows that the traditional agriculture of this region was sustainable and had minimal environmental stress.

Governance, Law, and Environmental Regulation

Ancient Indian political thought had elements of the regulation and management of resources. This was a form of environmental regulation.

Resource Rights and Community Obligations: Regulations on forest produce, hunting rights, and grazing regulations were well outlined in ancient Indian political thought. This was a form of balancing state and resource rights. There were punishments for offenses against the ecosystem. This was a form of environmental accountability.

Kingship as Stewardship: The role of the king (rajanya) in IKS was to ensure the welfare of the people (praja sukhâ). This included ensuring enough water supplies, fertile lands, and healthy forests. This was a form of governance and environmental well-being.

Cultural Practices Promoting Sustainability

Apart from texts and rules, many cultural practices promote sustainability.

Festivals and Seasonal Cycles

In India, many festivals are held at times that align with the agricultural and ecological cycles. For instance, many seasonal festivals coincide with the periods of sowing and harvesting.

Aesthetic and Religious Reverence for Nature

In Indian culture, nature, such as the river Ganga, the mountain, the tree (Peepal, Tulsi), and the animal, are revered. This reverence for nature ensures that nature is not exploited.

Relevance to Contemporary Sustainability Challenges

Contemporary environmental crises, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and water scarcity, highlight the importance of a holistic approach to sustainability. IKS contributes to this debate in the following ways:

a) **Integrative Worldview for Policy Formulation-**Contemporary sustainability policy frameworks have been shaped within compartmentalized systems. IKS provides an integrative worldview for policy formulation.

b) **Community Empowerment and Local Solution-**Sustainability problems can only be solved at the local level. IKS provides valuable insights into community resource management.

c) **Ethical Consumption and Sustainable Lifestyles-**The stress on moderation and ethical consumption in IKS is reminiscent of the contemporary discourse on sustainable lifestyles. Waste minimization, quality over quantity, and living within ecological limits are eternal ecological principles.

Challenges and Critical Perspectives

I. While IKS provides a rich source of insights, the integration of traditional and modern science faces several challenges:

II. Documentation Gaps: Much of indigenous knowledge is not documented, and what is documented is often oral.

III. Context-Specificity: What works in one ecological context may not easily be transferred to another without adaptation.

IV. Equity Concerns: In traditional systems of governance, power relations were often skewed, benefiting the ruling elite.

Nevertheless, these issues can be overcome through a research-based, collaborative, and respectful integration of traditional wisdom and scientific innovation.

9. Conclusion

Environmental sustainability in the context of the Indian Knowledge System is a rich and complex amalgam of philosophical, everyday, and governmental aspects that focus on the harmony between human societies and the natural world. From sacred groves to community water management, and from agriculture to ethics, IKS is a living embodiment of sustainability that is at once a moral and a practical imperative. As we look to the future and try to find ways to build a sustainable world, we can look to IKS for rich and inspiring frameworks that can nourish contemporary environmental thought and practice.

References:

1. Bhattacharya, S. (2003). *Mitahara and moderation: Ethical foundations of Indian dietary thought*. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 31(3), 285–302.
2. Bhattacharyya, R., Chakraborty, D., & Mukherjee, A. (2015). *Traditional soil nutrient management in India: Jivamrit and ecological balance*. *Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems*, 39(2), 234–250.
3. Biswas, A. K. (1970). *Research on water management in ancient India*. *Comprehensive Water Management Journal*, 12(4), 55–72.

4. Gadgil, M., & Vartak, V. D. (1983). *Sacred groves of India: A plea for continued conservation*. Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, 80(3), 313–320.
5. Gonda, J. (1963). *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*. The Hague: Mouton.
6. Kangle, R. P. (1960). *The Arthashastra of Kautilya* (Vol. 1). Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
7. Posey, D. A. (1999). *Cultural and spiritual values of biodiversity*. Intermediate Technology Publications.
8. Radhakrishnan, S., & Moore, C. A. (1957). *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton University Press.
9. Singh, R. B., & Lal, R. (2011). *Traditional cropping and mixed farming in India and their relevance to sustainable agriculture*. Sustainable Agriculture Reviews, 10, 55–72.

Author:
Assistant Professor,
Department of Economics, Kakojan College

The Convergence of Chemistry and Indian Knowledge System (IKS)

Utpal Sadhonider

Abstract

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) holds a wealth of scientific knowledge, particularly in chemistry, intertwined with everyday life, metallurgy, medicine, and alchemy. This convergence of ancient wisdom and modern science offers a unique perspective on sustainability, natural products, and holistic approaches. IKS encompasses traditional practices like Rasayana (alchemy), Ayurveda, and metallurgy, showcasing advanced chemical processes and understanding of elements. The concept of Panchamahabhuta (five elements) resonates with modern chemistry's periodic table, while atomism (Kanada's Vaisheshika school) predates modern atomic theory. By integrating IKS with modern chemistry, we can appreciate India's contributions to global scientific heritage and uncover new avenues for innovation.

Key-Words: IKS, Chemistry, Rasayana, Alchemy, Ayurveda

Introduction:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) has a rich cultural heritage, encompassing traditional practices, philosophies, and discoveries that have shaped various disciplines, including chemistry. Let's embark on a journey through time and explore the fascinating convergence of chemistry and IKS.

Ancient Roots: Panchamahabhuta and Atomism

The concept of Panchamahabhuta (five elements) - earth, water, fire, air, and ether - showcases an early understanding of elemental composition, resonating with modern chemistry's periodic table. This ancient wisdom laid the foundation for India's pursuit of knowledge in fields like alchemy (Rasayana), metallurgy, and Ayurveda. Meanwhile, Kanada's Vaisheshika school proposed the existence of atoms (ParamâGu) and molecules (AGu), predating modern atomic theory.

Alchemy and Metallurgy: Rasayana and Wootz Steel

Chemistry was deeply intertwined with alchemy, as seen in Rasayana, the art of transforming base metals into potent medicines or elixirs. Traditional practices in India, such as crafting high-carbon steel (wootz steel), demonstrate advanced metallurgical skills. These ancient techniques not only showcased India's scientific prowess but also influenced global metallurgy.

Ayurveda: Nature's Pharmacy

Ayurveda, India's traditional system of medicine, relies heavily on natural products and processes that align with chemical principles. Let's explore some fascinating aspects:

1. Rasayana: Transforming base metals into medicines, showcasing early chemical practices.

2. Panchamrita: A blend of five natural ingredients (milk, curd, ghee, honey, sugar) used in rituals, reflecting an understanding of mixtures and solutions.
3. Herbal extracts: Ayurvedic remedies like turmeric (curcumin), neem, and ashwagandha involve extraction processes akin to modern phytochemistry.
4. Swarna bhasma: Gold nanoparticles in Ayurvedic medicine, showing ancient knowledge of nanomaterials!

Swarna Bhasma: Gold Nanoparticles in Ayurveda

Swarna bhasma, or gold ash, involves processing gold into a fine powder, often used in traditional medicine. Studies suggest it contains gold nanoparticles!

- Traditional process:

1. Purify gold through heating and chemical treatments.
2. Mix with herbal extracts and incinerate (Putra process).
3. Repeat cycles to achieve desired fineness.

- Modern insights:

- Gold nanoparticles have antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties.
- Potential applications in cancer therapy and drug delivery.

More Ayurvedic Practices with a Chemical Twist

1. Tamalapatra (Cinnamomum tamala) processing: Leaves are fermented to enhance medicinal properties. Microbial enzymes break down complex compounds into bioactive molecules.
 - Chemistry: Enzymatic hydrolysis, release of essential oils.
2. Triphala: A blend of three fruits (Amalaki, Bibhitaki, Haritaki). Its antioxidant properties stem from polyphenols and flavonoids.
 - Chemistry: Synergistic effects of phytochemicals.

3. Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) extracts: Used for skin and pest control. Azadirachtin, a limonoid, is the key compound.
 - Chemistry: Insecticidal action via hormone disruption.
4. Amla (*Phyllanthus emblica*) processing: Rich in vitamin C, amla's antioxidant power increases with thermal processing.
 - Chemistry: Maillard reaction, formation of bioactive compounds.

Doshas and Panchakarma: Holistic Balance

- Doshas: The three fundamental energies governing our body:
 1. Vata (Air + Ether): Movement, creativity, communication
 2. Pitta (Fire + Water): Metabolism, digestion, transformation
 3. Kapha (Water + Earth): Structure, stability, lubrication
 - Panchakarma: Five therapeutic procedures for detox and rejuvenation:
 1. Vamana (Emesis): Cleansing via induced vomiting
 2. Purgation (Pravahana): Laxatives for bowel cleansing
 3. Basti (Enema): Medicated enemas for nourishment
 4. Nasya (Nasal administration): Clearing nasal passages
 5. Rokhana (Bloodletting): Removing impurities from blood
- Chemistry connections:
- Herbs like Triphala and Gangeshuni modulate gut microbiota.
 - Sesame oil (Shirodhara) in scalp massages has antioxidant effects.

Conclusion:

The convergence of Chemistry and the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) reveals a rich tapestry of ancient wisdom and modern science. IKS, encompassing traditional practices like Rasayana (alchemy), Ayurveda, and metallurgy, showcases advanced chemical processes and understanding of elements. The concept of Panchamahabhuta (five elements) resonates with modern

chemistry's periodic table, while atomism (Kanada's Vaisheshika school) predates modern atomic theory.

This blend of ancient insights and modern chemistry offers a unique perspective on sustainability, natural products, and holistic approaches. By integrating IKS with modern science, we can appreciate India's contributions to global scientific heritage and uncover new avenues for innovation. Interdisciplinary research and collaboration can help preserve and promote IKS, addressing contemporary challenges like healthcare, ecology, and environmental sustainability.

References:

1. Samuel Lallianrawna (2025). Indian Knowledge System and Chemistry: Unveiling the Science Behind Traditional Practices. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 14(5), 1438-1440.
2. Puri, J. (2025). IKS in Indian Education: A Transformative Framework for Cultural Continuity and Academic Innovation. *Advances in Consumer Research*.
3. Amita Gupta (2024). A study of the scientific approach inherited in the Indian knowledge system (IKS). *The Scientific Temper*, 15(02), 2385-2389.
4. Mahesh K. M. et al. (2023). Literature Review on Indian Ancient University in Imparting Holistic and Multidisciplinary: To Create Indian Knowledge System (IKS). *International Journal of Philosophy and Languages (IJPL)*, 2(1), 1-17.
5. Mahadevan, B. et al. (2022). *Introduction to Indian Knowledge System: Concepts and Applications*. PHI Learning Private Ltd. Delhi.

Author:

Assistant Professor,

Department of Chemistry, Kakojan College,

Jorhat, Assam

Paper Received: 26/02/2026 Paper Accepted: 05/03/2026
Paper Published: 12/03/2026

Harmony in Devotion: The Ethical Teachings of Srimanta Sankaradeva's Neo-Vaishnavism

Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah

Abstract

Srimanta Sankaradeva (1449–1568 CE), a visionary saint-scholar from Assam, India, founded Neo-Vaishnavism (Ekasarana Dharma), a monotheistic Bhakti tradition emphasizing exclusive devotion to Lord Krishna. This article explores the ethical underpinnings of his teachings, which integrated spirituality with moral principles to address medieval societal issues like caste discrimination, ritual excesses, and ethnic divisions.

Central to Neo-Vaishnavism is bhakti as a foundation for ethical living, promoting virtues such as humility, compassion, and integrity through practices like sravana and kirtana. Sankaradeva advocated equality and inclusivity, rejecting caste hierarchies and welcoming all communities into congregational worship in Namghars and Satras. Non-violence (ahimsa) extended to opposing animal sacrifices and fostering humanism, while rejecting idolatry and ritualism shifted focus to inner morality and righteous conduct.

Through cultural innovations like Borgeets, Ankiya Naats, and Sattriya dances, these ethics unified Assam's diverse populace, catalyzing social harmony and cultural renaissance. The article highlights their contemporary relevance in combating inequality,

promoting peace, and inspiring inclusive spirituality in a polarized world.

Key words:

Neo-Vaishnavism, Srimanta Sankaradeva, Ethical Teachings, Bhakti, Equality, Inclusivity, Non-Violence, Ahimsa, Social Harmony, Cultural Renaissance, Ekasarana Dharma, Assam.

Introduction

Srimanta Sankaradeva (1449–1568 CE), a revered saint-scholar, poet, playwright, and social reformer from Assam, India, stands as a pivotal figure in the Bhakti movement of medieval India. Born in a Brahmin family in Bordowa, Assam, during a period marked by social fragmentation, religious orthodoxy, and ethnic conflicts, Sankaradeva founded Neo-Vaishnavism, also known as Ekasarana Dharma or Mahapurushiya Dharma. This monotheistic devotional tradition emphasized exclusive surrender (ekasarana) to Lord Krishna or Vishnu, rejecting ritualistic excesses and promoting ethical living as the core of spiritual practice. Unlike the ritual-heavy Brahmanical Hinduism prevalent at the time, Sankaradeva’s teachings integrated devotion (bhakti) with moral principles, fostering social harmony and inclusivity.

Neo-Vaishnavism emerged in the 15th-16th centuries amid Assam’s diverse ethnic landscape, including tribal communities and influences from Tantric and Shakta sects. Sankaradeva’s philosophy drew from the Bhagavata Purana, Vedanta, and local traditions, but he adapted them to create an accessible, egalitarian faith. His ethical teachings—rooted in non-violence, equality, humanism, and ethical conduct—addressed societal ills like caste discrimination, animal sacrifices, and superstition. Through innovative cultural forms such as Borgeets (devotional songs), Ankiya Naats (one-act plays), and Sattras (monastic institutions), he disseminated these ideals, uniting disparate communities under a shared moral framework. This article explores the key ethical dimensions of Sankaradeva’s Neo-Vaishnavism, its societal impact, and contemporary relevance, drawing on historical and scholarly insights.

Core Ethical Principles in Neo-Vaishnavism Bhakti as the Foundation of Ethical Living

At the heart of Sankaradeva's teachings lies bhakti, or selfless devotion to a single deity (Krishna), which he viewed as the supreme ethical path. Unlike knowledge (jnana) or ritual action (karma) emphasized in orthodox Hinduism, bhakti in Ekasarana Dharma is *dasya-bhakti*—servitude to God—manifested through *srava* (listening to scriptures) and *kirtana* (singing God's praises). This devotion is not mere emotional fervor but a moral discipline that cultivates virtues like humility, compassion, and integrity.

Sankaradeva argued that true devotion eradicates ego and fosters ethical behavior, as seen in his *Gunamala*: "The whole world resteth in Thee/Thou art Son of Daivakee/Thy Feet are the only key/For enslaved men to be free." By prioritizing inner purity over external rituals, he challenged unethical practices like animal sacrifices, which were rampant in Tantric worship. Bhakti, in his view, naturally leads to moral upliftment, making ethical living inseparable from spiritual pursuit. This principle democratized religion, allowing anyone—regardless of birth—to achieve salvation through ethical devotion, thus promoting personal responsibility and moral growth.

Equality and Inclusivity: Dismantling Caste Hierarchies

One of Sankaradeva's most revolutionary ethical teachings was the rejection of caste-based discrimination, advocating a classless society. In an era dominated by Brahmanical privileges, he proclaimed that devotion transcends social barriers: "There is no favoritism and bias in Bhakti/There is no unfairness and inequality in the Krishna's Kirtana." His *Kirtana* further states: "*Kukkura candela gardavaro atma ram/Janiya savako pari kariva pranam*" (God resides even in a dog or Chandala; one should respect all).

Neo-Vaishnavism welcomed people from all castes, tribes, and religions into *Namghars* (prayer halls) for congregational worship, fostering social integration. Sankaradeva's institutions, like *Sattras*, became hubs for egalitarian practices, where Brahmins and lower castes dined together, breaking untouchability. This

ethical stance on equality extended to gender; women participated actively in devotional activities, singing Borgeets and attending assemblies, which was progressive for the time. By borrowing elements from diverse ethnic groups and composing in Brajawali (a hybrid language accessible to the masses), he promoted cultural amalgamation, emphasizing humanism over division. This inclusivity not only unified Assam's fragmented society but also instilled ethical values of respect and empathy.

Non-Violence and Compassion

Ahimsa (non-violence) forms a cornerstone of Sankaradeva's ethics, influenced by Vaishnava ideals but applied broadly to social life. He vehemently opposed animal sacrifices and ritual violence, viewing them as unethical and contrary to true devotion. Instead, he advocated compassion toward all beings, echoing the Bhagavata Purana's emphasis on mercy.

In his teachings, non-violence extends beyond physical harm to include verbal and mental kindness. Sankaradeva's philosophy posits that God resides in every creature, making harm to others a sin against the divine. This ethic influenced dietary practices among followers, promoting vegetarianism and humane treatment of animals. Socially, it encouraged conflict resolution through dialogue and community harmony, countering the ethnic strife in medieval Assam. By integrating non-violence into daily life, Sankaradeva's Neo-Vaishnavism nurtured a moral society where compassion was a devotional duty.

Rejection of Ritualism and Idolatry: Focus on Inner Morality

Sankaradeva critiqued ritualistic worship and idolatry as superficial and divisive, arguing they bred superstition and inequality. He rejected Vedic karma-kanda (ritual actions) and polytheism, promoting a formless God accessible through nama (chanting names) rather than idols or elaborate ceremonies. This ethical shift

emphasized inner morality—truthfulness, simplicity, and self-discipline—over external displays.

His philosophy aligns with Advaita Vedanta’s non-dualism but incorporates qualified dualism (Vishista Advaita), where God is both transcendent and immanent. By simplifying worship to congregational singing and listening, he made ethics central: devotion must manifest in righteous actions, not rituals. This rejection curbed exploitation by priests and empowered individuals to lead moral lives independently.

Moral Conduct, Social Harmony, and Humanism

Sankaradeva’s teachings stressed ethical conduct as essential for societal well-being. Virtues like truth (satya), contentment (santosha), and service (seva) were integral to bhakti. He promoted family ethics, gender respect, and community cooperation, viewing society as a reflection of divine order.

Humanism permeates his philosophy: recognizing the divine in all foster’s ethical interactions. His use of arts—dramas like Ankiya Naats and dances like Sattriya—served as moral education tools, depicting ethical dilemmas and resolutions. This cultural renaissance reinforced social harmony, integrating tribes and castes into a unified Assamese identity.

Societal Impact and Contemporary Relevance

Sankaradeva’s ethical teachings transformed medieval Assam, accelerating Sanskritization while creating a casteless ethos. Sattras and Namghars became centers for education, arts, and social welfare, promoting literacy and ethical discourse. His movement bridged ethnic divides, contributing to a “greater Assamese society.”

In contemporary times, these teachings remain relevant amid social inequalities and environmental challenges. Neo-Vaishnavism’s emphasis on equality addresses casteism and gender disparities, while non-violence supports sustainability and peace-building. Its humanistic philosophy inspires community-based

initiatives, like cultural tourism in Assam, preserving heritage while fostering ethical tourism. Globally, it offers a model for inclusive spirituality in a polarized world.

Conclusion

Srimanta Sankaradeva's Neo-Vaishnavism weaves ethics into the fabric of devotion, offering a timeless blueprint for moral living. By championing bhakti, equality, non-violence, and humanism, he not only reformed religion but also sculpted a harmonious society. His legacy endures in Assam's cultural ethos, reminding us that true spirituality lies in ethical action and universal compassion.

References

1. Bezborah, Chandan Jyoti, et al. "Neo-Vaishnavism: A Platform To Develop Community-Based Cultural Tourism in the State of Assam." 'Educational Administration: Theory and Practice', vol. 30, no. 5, 2024, pp. 1435-1449.
2. Bora, Nava Jyoti. "Philosophical Traits of Sankaradeva's Great Socio-Cultural Revolution and Emergence of Vaishnavite Monasteries in Assam." 'International Journal of Scientific Development and Research', vol. 8, no. 5, 2023, pp. 1-5.
3. Chakraborty, Anupam. "Srimanta Sankardeva: Life, Teachings, Ekasarana Dharma and Cultural Renaissance in Assam." 'IAS Gyan', 2024.
4. Das, Dhrubajyoti. "Ethical Foundations of Srimanta Sankardev's EkacæaraGa Dharma and its Contemporary Relevance." 'DVK Journals', vol. 1, no. 1, 4 Apr. 2023, pp. 1-12.
5. Das, Jogen. "The Role of Srimanta Sankardev and his Vaisnavism in Resurrection the Assamese People's Faith, Culture, Conscience and Nationa." 'IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science', vol. 22, no. 10, 14 Oct. 2017, pp. 36-40.

6. Gogoi, Nityananda. “Historical Insights on Srimanta Sankardeva and the Neo-Vaishnavism Movement: Socio-Political and Cultural Transformations in Medieval Assam.” ‘International Journal of Research - GRANTHAALAYAH’, vol. 12, no. 4, 2024, pp. 1-15.
7. Jash, Sayamtara. “Srimanta Sankardeva: The Architect of Greater Assamese Society.” ‘Indian Culture’, 2024. ‘Indiaculture.gov.in’, indiaculture.gov.in/stories/srimanta-sankardeva-architect-greater-assamese-society. Accessed 17 Feb. 2026.
8. Kalita, Bhaben. “Srimanta Sankardeva and Neo-Vaishnavism Movement in Assam.” ‘International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development’, vol. 8, no. 4, 2025, pp. 1-6. ‘IJSRED.com’, www.ijared.com/volume8/issue4/IJSRED-V8I4P84.pdf. Accessed 17 Feb. 2026.
9. Mahanta, Banani. “The Neo-Vaishnavism of Srimanta Sankardeva: A Great Socio-Cultural Revolution in Assam.”
10. Nath, Dhruba Jyoti. “Teachings of Srimanta Sankardev towards Societal and Humanistic Development: A Retrospect.” ‘Universal Research Reports’, vol. 8, no. 1, 2021, pp. 1-8.
11. Sarma, Satyendranath. “Sreemanta Sankardeva’s Social and Moral Philosophy: An Analysis.” ‘International Journal of Management’, vol. 11, no. 12, 2020, pp. 1-10. ‘iaeme.com’, iaeme.com/MasterAdmin/Journal_uploads/IJM/VOLUME_11_ISSUE_12/IJM_11_12_461.pdf. Accessed 17 Feb. 2026.
12. Sharma, Anuradha. “Vaishnavism as Preached by Shankardeva.” ‘Indica Today’, 21 Mar. 2024.

Author:

Assistant Professor, Department of English,
Kakojan College, Jorhat, Assam

ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ভূমিকা

ড° ধৰ্মেন্দ্ৰ দত্ত

সাৰাংশ

অসমীয়া সাহিত্য, ভাৰতৰ উত্তৰ-পূৰ্বাঞ্চলৰ অসম ৰাজ্যৰ পৰা উদ্ভৱ হোৱা, ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি (Indian Knowledge System - IKS) ৰ এক গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ অংশ। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিয়ে প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় ঐতিহ্যত নিহিত হৈ থকা পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞান, দৰ্শন, বিজ্ঞান, কলা আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠানক অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰে। এই আলোচনাত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই স্থানীয় জ্ঞান, নৈতিক মূল্যবোধ আৰু আধ্যাত্মিক অন্তৰ্দৃষ্টি সংৰক্ষণ আৰু প্ৰচাৰ কৰি সামগ্ৰিক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীত কেনেকৈ অৱদান আগবঢ়াইছে সেইটো বিচাৰ কৰা হৈছে। মধ্যযুগীয় ভক্তিমূলক ৰচনাৰ পৰা আধুনিক কথাসাহিত্যলৈকে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই লোককথা, নৈতিক শিক্ষা আৰু সমাজ-সাংস্কৃতিক প্ৰতিফলনক একত্ৰিত কৰি মানুহ, প্ৰকৃতি আৰু সমাজৰ মাজত সামঞ্জস্যতা গঢ়ি তুলিছে। শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱৰ দৰে মূল ব্যক্তিত্বই ভক্তিপ্ৰেৰিত ৰচনাৰ জৰিয়তে ভক্তি, ঐক্য আৰু নৈতিক জীৱনযাপনৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্ব দি এই একত্ৰীকৰণৰ উদাহৰণ দাঙি ধৰিছে। বিশ্লেষণত আধুনিকীকৰণৰ মাজত পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞানক জীয়াই ৰখাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত সাহিত্যৰ ভূমিকাক গুৰুত্ব প্ৰদান কৰা হৈছে, যি সমসাময়িক শিক্ষা আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক সংৰক্ষণৰ বাবে অন্তৰ্দৃষ্টি প্ৰদান কৰে। ঐতিহাসিক বিকাশ, নিৰ্দিষ্ট অৱদান আৰু চলিত প্ৰাসংগিকতা পৰীক্ষা কৰি এই অধ্যয়নত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিত সমৃদ্ধ কৰাত থকা স্থায়ী উল্লেখ কৰা হৈছে।

বীজ শব্দঃ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য, ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি, শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ, ভক্তি আন্দোলন, লোককথা, সাংস্কৃতিক সংৰক্ষণ, পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞান, নৈতিক

মূল্যবোধ, উত্তৰ-পূৰ্ব ভাৰত, সাহিত্যিক ঐতিহ্য

ভূমিকাঃ

ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি (IKS) হৈছে এক বিস্তৃত কাঠামো যি সহস্ৰাব্দৰ ওপৰত বিকশিত হৈছে, বেদ গ্ৰন্থ, উপনিষদ আৰু আঞ্চলিক পৰম্পৰাৰ পৰা জ্ঞান লাভ কৰি আন্তঃসংযোগিতা, প্ৰকৃতিৰ সৈতে সামঞ্জস্যতা আৰু বস্তুগত আৰু আধ্যাত্মিক অনুসন্ধানৰ একত্ৰীকৰণক গুৰুত্ব দিয়ে। ইয়াত জ্ঞান (জ্ঞান), বিজ্ঞান (বিজ্ঞান) আৰু জীৱন দৰ্শন (জীৱন দৰ্শন)ৰ দৰে উপাদান অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত, যি সামগ্ৰিক বিকাশ, নৈতিক জীৱন - যাপনক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰে। এই পদ্ধতিত আঞ্চলিক সাহিত্যই পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞান সংৰক্ষণ আৰু প্ৰচাৰত গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা পালন কৰে, প্ৰাচীন নীতিসমূহক স্থানীয় প্ৰসংগত অনুকূল কৰি তোলে।

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত ৯ - ১০ম শতিকাত সংস্কৃত আৰু স্থানীয় লোককথাৰ প্ৰভাৱ দেখা পোৱা যায়। ই ভক্তিমূলক যুগ, ঔপনিৱেশিক পুনৰ্জীৱন আৰু আধুনিক আত্মনিৰীক্ষণৰ যুগৰ মাজেৰে বিকশিত হৈছে, যি অসমৰ বৈচিত্ৰময় সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্যক প্ৰতিফলিত কৰে, যি আহোম, বড়ো, মিচিং আৰু অন্যান্য জাতিগত গোটেৰে দ্বাৰা গঢ় লৈ উঠিছে। ভক্তিমূলক সাহিত্যই কেৱল ঐতিহাসিক ঘটনা আৰু সমাজীয় নিয়মক নথিভুক্ত কৰাই নহয়, নৈতিক দৰ্শন, পৰিৱেশীয় নৈতিকতা আৰু আধ্যাত্মিক অনুসন্ধানৰ দৰে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ উপাদানকো অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰে।

গৱেষণা পত্ৰত আলোচনা কৰা হৈছে যে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই স্থানীয় পৰম্পৰা আৰু ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ মাজত সাঁকো হিচাপে কাম কৰে। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ঐতিহাসিক বিকাশ, মূল অৱদান আৰু আধুনিক প্ৰাসংগিকতা বিশ্লেষণ কৰি অসমীয়া ৰচনাই ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিক কেনেকৈ সমৃদ্ধ কৰাৰ লগতে সাংস্কৃতিক ধাৰাবাহিকতা আৰু বৌদ্ধিক উদ্ভাৱনক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰিছে সেইটো প্ৰদৰ্শিত কৰা হৈছে।

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ঐতিহাসিক অৱলোকন

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসক তিনিটা মূল যুগত ভাগ কৰা হৈছে: প্ৰাৰম্ভিক (১৩শ শতিকালৈকে), মধ্য (১৪-১৯শ শতিকা) আৰু আধুনিক (১৯শ শতিকাৰ পৰা)।

প্ৰাৰম্ভিক যুগ আৰম্ভ হৈছিল মৌখিক আৰু চৰ্যাপদৰ সময়ত খ্ৰীষ্টীয় ৯ম - ১০ম শতিকাত। ১৩ শ শতিকাত হেম সৰস্বতীয়ে বিষ্ণু পুৰাণৰ পৰা বিষয়বস্তু গ্ৰহণ কৰি প্ৰহ্লাদ চৰিত্ৰ ৰচনা কৰিছিল। মাধৱ কন্দলীৰ ১৪শ শতিকাত ৰচিত ৰামায়ণ অনুবাদে সংস্কৃত মহাকাব্যক অসমীয়াত সমৃদ্ধ কৰিছে আৰু স্থানীয় ভাষা তথা লোককথা অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰি ধৰ্ম আৰু কৰ্মৰ দৰে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ দাৰ্শনিক চিন্তাক স্থানীয়কৰণ কৰিছে।

মধ্য যুগত ভক্তি আন্দোলনৰ চিহ্নত ভক্তিমূলক সাহিত্যৰ উত্থান হৈছিল শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ (১৪৪৯-১৫৬৮) ৰ নেতৃত্বত। শংকৰদেৱে ৰচনা কৰা কীৰ্তন-ঘোষা আৰু বৰগীতত একশৰণ ধৰ্মক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰা হৈছে, যি বৈদিক নীতিসমূহক অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ সৈতে একত্ৰিত কৰা একশ্বৰবাদী বৈষ্ণৱধৰ্ম। মধ্য যুগত ৰচনা কৰা বুৰঞ্জীসমূহে আহোম বংশাৱলীৰ ঐতিহাসিক আৰু পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞান সংৰক্ষণ কৰাৰ লগতে মৌখিক পৰম্পৰাক লিখিত ৰূপ প্ৰদান কৰে।

উনৈশ শতিকাত খ্ৰীষ্টীয়ান মিশ্যনেৰীসকল, হেমচন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱা, গুণাভিৰাম বৰুৱা, আনন্দৰাম ঢেকীয়ালফুকন, চন্দ্ৰকুমাৰ আগৰৱালা, হেমচন্দ্ৰ গোস্বামী আৰু লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ দৰে ব্যক্তিৰ নেতৃত্বত আধুনিক অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ বিকশিত হৈছিল। জোনাকী আলোচনীৰ দৰে প্ৰকাশনে ৰাষ্ট্ৰবাদ আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক পৰিচয়ক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰিছে।

ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ অৱদান

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই দাৰ্শনিক, নৈতিক আৰু ব্যৱহাৰিক জ্ঞান সংৰক্ষণ কৰি ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ জৰিয়তে সামগ্ৰিক সুস্থতা আৰু আন্তঃসংযোগিতাক গুৰুত্ব দিয়ে। এই অৱদানৰ কেন্দ্ৰত আছে ভক্তি পৰম্পৰা, যি শংকৰদেৱৰ ৰচনাত উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে দেখা যায়। তেওঁৰ কীৰ্তন-ঘোষা, ভক্তিমূলক গানৰ সংকলন, বেদান্তিক ধাৰণা যেনে ঐক্য আৰু আত্ম-উপলব্ধিক প্ৰতিধ্বনিত কৰাৰ উপৰিও জাতি আৰু সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মাজত সামঞ্জস্যতাক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰে। শংকৰদেৱৰ অক্ষীয়া নাট আৰু সত্ৰীয়া নৃত্যই ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ কাহিনীক নাটকীয়কৰণ কৰে, পুৰুষাৰ্থ (মানৱ লক্ষ্য)ৰ দৰে বিমূৰ্ত ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ ধাৰণাক জনসাধাৰণৰ বাবে সহজলভ্য কৰি তোলে। অন্য ৰচনা যেনে মাধৱদেৱৰ নাম ঘোষাই অহিংসা আৰু সত্যৰ দৰে নৈতিক নীতিক শক্তিশালী কৰাৰ লগতে উপনিষদীয়

চিন্তাধাৰাক গুৰুত্ব প্ৰদান কৰে।

লোককথা আৰু স্থানীয় জ্ঞানৰ সংৰক্ষণ

লোককথাই প্ৰকৃতি, সমাজ আৰু নৈতিকতাৰ ওপৰত পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞানক সংক্ষিপ্ত কৰি অসমীয়া সাহিত্যক ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ সৈতে সংযোগৰ ভিত্তি গঢ়ি তুলিছে। বেজবৰুৱাৰ দ্বাৰা সংকলিত বুঢ়ী আইৰ সাধুৰ দৰে কাহিনীত তেজীমলা, তাৱৈকৰ সাধু, মেকুৰী জীয়েকৰ সাধু, টোৰাকাউৰী আৰু টিপচীচৰাই, তুলা আৰু তেজা আৰু চিলনীৰ জীয়েকৰ সাধুৰ দৰে কাহিনী অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত, যি স্থিতিস্থাপকতা, পৰিৱেশীয় সামঞ্জস্যতা আৰু সমাজীয় নিয়মৰ শিক্ষা দিয়ে। ওজা-পালি প্ৰদৰ্শন, মহাভাৰত আৰু মনসা কাহিনী বৰ্ণনা কৰি, মৌখিক পৰম্পৰাক মহাকাব্যৰ সৈতে মিহলাই ধৰ্ম আৰু পৰিৱেশ বিজ্ঞানৰ ওপৰত শিক্ষা দিয়ে। এই মৌখিক-লিখিত পৰিৱৰ্তনে পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞানৰ ধাৰাবাহিকতা নিৰ্দ্ধাৰিত কৰে।

নৈতিক আৰু বৈজ্ঞানিক উপাদান

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ নৈতিক দিশসমূহ অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰে, যেনে ত্ৰিগুণ (সত্ত্ব, ৰজঃ, তমঃ) আৰু পঞ্চ মহাকোষ (অস্তিত্বৰ পাঁচটা আৱৰণ)। হেমচন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱাৰ কনিয়াৰ কীৰ্তনৰ দৰে ৰচনাই সমাজীয় দুগুণক সমালোচনা কৰাৰ উপৰিও নৈতিক সংস্কাৰক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰে। সামগ্ৰিকভাৱে এই অৱদানসমূহে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ উঁহাল চহকী কৰাৰ লগতে প্ৰাচীন জ্ঞানক আধুনিক বাস্তৱতাৰ লগত সংযোগ কৰিছে।

মূল ব্যক্তিত্ব আৰু উদাহৰণমূলক ৰচনা

শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ এজন বহুমুখী পণ্ডিত হিচাপে সাহিত্য, সংগীত আৰু নাট্যকলাত বিদগ্ধ আছিল। শংকৰদেৱে ৰচনা কৰা বৰগীত (ভক্তিমূলক গান) আৰু গুণমালা (ভাগৱতৰ সাৰাংশ)ই বৈদিক দৰ্শনক গীতিময় ৰূপত সংক্ষিপ্ত কৰে, মুক্তিৰ পথ হিচাপে ভক্তিক গুৰুত্ব দিয়ে। সত্ৰ স্থাপন কৰি তেওঁ জ্ঞান প্ৰচাৰক প্ৰতিষ্ঠানীকৰণ কৰাৰ লগতে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিক সম্প্ৰদায়-ভিত্তিক শিক্ষণক প্ৰতিফলিত কৰিছে। লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাই লোককথা, নৈতিক মূল্যবোধ আৰু ব্যঙ্গাত্মক ৰচনাই ঔপনিৱেশিকতাক সমালোচনা কৰে, ভাৰতীয়

জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ ঔপনিবেশিকতা-বিৰোধী নীতিৰ সৈতে সংগতি ৰাখি। সমসাময়িক লেখিকা ইন্দিৰা গোস্বামী (মামনি ৰাইছম গোস্বামী) য়ে দাঁতাল হাতীয়ে উঁয়ে খোৱা হাউদা দৰে উপন্যাসত পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞানক নাৰীবাদী দৃষ্টিভংগীৰ সৈতে একত্ৰিত কৰি তুলি সমাজীয় সামঞ্জস্যতাক সম্বোধন কৰে। এই ব্যক্তিসকলৰ ৰচনাই অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ পৰম্পৰাগত ধাৰণাক সক্ৰিয়ভাৱে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ সৈতে সংযোগ কৰে।

আধুনিক প্ৰাসংগিকতা আৰু প্ৰত্যাহ্বান

সমসাময়িক যুগত অসমীয়া সাহিত্যই বিশ্বায়নৰ প্ৰভাৱক সম্বোধন কৰি ঐতিহ্য সংৰক্ষণ কৰি ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ বাবে প্ৰাসংগিক হৈ থাকে। ২০২০ ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় শিক্ষা নীতিয়ে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিক পাঠ্যক্ৰমত অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰাৰ পোষকতা কৰে, য'ত অসমীয়া ৰচনাই ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰীসকলক অনুষ্ঠান আৰু নৈতিক নেতৃত্ব শিকাব পাৰে। কিন্তু নগৰীয়কৰণ আৰু প্ৰাচ্যাত্যৰ প্ৰভাৱে লোককথা প্ৰচাৰত বিপদাশংকা সৃষ্টি কৰিছে। অসমীয়া ভাষাক ধ্ৰুপদী ভাষাৰ মৰ্যাদা (২০২৪) প্ৰদানে অসমীয়া ভাষাক অধিক পৰিমাণে শক্তিশালী কৰি তুলিছে।

উপসংহাৰ

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিত গভীৰ ভূমিকা, পৰম্পৰাগত জ্ঞানৰ সংৰক্ষক হিচাপে কাম কৰি সমাজীয় প্ৰয়োজনীয়তাক পূৰণ কৰিছে। শংকৰদেৱৰ ভক্তিমূলক উদ্ভাৱনৰ পৰা আধুনিক কাহিনীলৈকে ই সামগ্ৰিকতা, নৈতিকতা আৰু সাংস্কৃতিক আন্তঃসংযোগিতাক মূৰ্ত কৰে। এই সাহিত্যই কেৱল লোককথা আৰু স্থানীয় অনুষ্ঠান সংৰক্ষণ কৰাই নহয়, সমাজীয় ন্যায়ৰ দৰে বিশ্বব্যাপী প্ৰত্যাহ্বানৰ বাবে সমসাময়িক সমাধানো অনুপ্ৰাণিত কৰে। ভাৰত অগ্ৰসৰ হোৱাৰ লগে লগে অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ঐতিহ্যক ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিৰ মাজত অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত কৰি ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় সমন্বয়তাক সমৃদ্ধ কৰাৰ লগতে পৰম্পৰা আৰু আধুনিকতাৰ সুযম মিশ্ৰণক প্ৰসাৰিত কৰিছে।

প্ৰসংগ পুথি

১. কাকতি, বাণীকান্ত। ১৯৫৩। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাস। গুৱাহাটী :

- গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্ৰকাশন।
২. গগৈ, যতীন্দ্ৰ নাথ। ১৯৭২। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ বুৰঞ্জী। গুৱাহাটীঃ অসম সাহিত্য সভা।
৩. গোস্বামী, ৰঞ্জিত। ২০১৫। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান ব্যৱস্থাত অসমীয়া লোকসাহিত্যৰ ভূমিকা। ডিব্ৰুগড়: ডিব্ৰুগড় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্ৰকাশন।
৪. চৌধুৰী, প্ৰিয়ংকা। ২০২০। শংকৰদেৱৰ সাহিত্যত ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞানৰ প্ৰতিফলন। গুৱাহাটীঃ অসম সাহিত্য সভা।
৫. নেওগ, মহেশ্বৰ। ১৯৯০। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ অধ্যয়ন। গুৱাহাটীঃ ভানু প্ৰকাশ।
৬. বৰুৱা, বীৰিঞ্চি কুমাৰ। ১৯৬৪। অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতি আৰু সাহিত্য। গুৱাহাটীঃ অসম প্ৰকাশন পৰিষদ।
৭. বৰুৱা, হেম। ২০০৩। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি আৰু অসমীয়া ভক্তি সাহিত্য। গুৱাহাটীঃ অসম প্ৰকাশন পৰিষদ।
৮. ভূঞা, সূৰ্য কুমাৰ। ১৯৫৬। অসমৰ সাহিত্যিক পৰম্পৰা। গুৱাহাটীঃ লয়াৰ্ছ বুক ষ্টল।
৯. দাস, হেমন্ত কুমাৰ। ২০১০। অসমীয়া সাহিত্যত ভাৰতীয় দৰ্শনৰ প্ৰভাৱ। গুৱাহাটীঃ গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় প্ৰকাশন।
১০. শৰ্মা, সত্যেন্দ্ৰ নাথ। ১৯৮৭। ভাৰতীয় সাহিত্যৰ ইতিহাসত অসমীয়া সাহিত্য। নতুন দিল্লীঃ সাহিত্য অকাডেমী।

লেখকঃ

সহযোগী অধ্যাপক, অসমীয়া বিভাগ,
কাকজান মহাবিদ্যালয়

ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিত মনুস্মৃতিঃ এক ৰাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষণ

মানৱজ্যোতি শইকীয়া

আৰম্ভণি :

ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ বৈশিষ্ট্য হ'ল ভাৰতৰ ঐতিহ্যপূৰ্ণ সভ্যতা-সংস্কৃতি, বেদ, বেদাঙ্গদি, শাস্ত্ৰসমূহ তথা অতি প্ৰাচীন কালৰে পৰা পালন কৰি অহা আচাৰ-নীতি সংস্কাৰ আদি। এই বৈশিষ্ট্যই ভাৰত আৰু ভাৰতীয়ক পৃথিৱীৰ আন দেশ তথা দেশবাসীৰ পৰা এক সুকীয়া গৌৰৱোজ্জ্বল স্থানত বহুৱাই ৰাখিছে (শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ. ৫)। ভাৰতীয় কৃষ্টি, সংস্কৃতি আৰু জ্ঞান জীৱন দৰ্শনে প্ৰাচীন কালৰে পৰাই বৰ্তমান সময়লৈকে জ্ঞানৰ ধাৰাবাহিকতা প্ৰবাহমান কৰি ৰাখিছে। অধ্যাপক মেকডোনেলে *History of Sanskrit Literature* নামৰ গ্ৰন্থত ভাৰতীয় সংস্কৃতি সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশৰ ধাৰা বৈদিক যুগৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি কেনেদৰে বিকাশ সাধন হৈছে আৰু ইয়াৰ লগত বেদ, উপনিষদ, ৰামায়ণ, মহাভাৰত, তাত্ত্বিক ধাৰণা তথা দিশসমূহৰ বিষয়ে উল্লেখ কৰিছে। ইয়াতেই ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ সাংস্কৃতিক ধাৰাৰ বিষয়ে উল্লেখ কৰিছে এনেদৰে, “চীন দেশৰ দৰে আন কোনো দেশৰে ভাৰতৰ দৰে তিনিহাজাৰ বছৰ ধৰি ভাষা, সাহিত্য, ধৰ্মমত, আচাৰ, অনুষ্ঠান, নাট্য চৰ্চা আৰু সামাজিক প্ৰথাৰ সংক্ৰান্তত বিকাশ লাভৰ এনে নিৰ্দেশন পাবলৈ নাই” (নেহৰু, ২০১৬, পৃ. ৯১)। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পৰম্পৰাৰ অন্য এটা উমান পাব পাৰি প্ৰাচ্যতত্ত্ববিদ মেক্সমুলাৰৰ এটি মন্তব্যৰ দ্বাৰা। ১৮৮২ চনত ইংলেণ্ডৰ কেম্ব্ৰিজ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ত দিয়া এটি ভাষণত তেখেতে কৈছিল, “যদিহে আমি সমস্ত বিশ্বতে অন্বেষণ কৰোঁ যে কোনখন দেশক প্ৰকৃতিয়ে

সর্বাধিক ঐশ্বর্য, শক্তি আৰু সৌন্দৰ্যৰে সমৃদ্ধ কৰিছে, কোনখন দেশৰ ঠায়ে ঠায়ে মৰততে সৰগৰ সৃষ্টি হৈছে, মই নিশ্চিতভাৱে আঙুলিয়াব লাগিব ভাৰতবৰ্ষলৈ বুলি। যদিহে মোক কোনোবাই সোধে যে কোনখন দেশৰ আকাশৰ তলত মানুহৰ মনে সৰ্বোৎকৃষ্ট কিছুমান অৱদানৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ বিকাশ ঘটাইছে, অত্যন্ত গভীৰভাৱে জীৱনৰ জটিলতম সমস্যাৰ সমাধানৰ উদ্দেশ্যে চিন্তা কৰি কোনো কোনো মীমাংসাত উপনীত হৈছে আৰু এই কৃতিত্বৰ প্ৰতি মনোযোগ দিয়াটো প্লেট', কাণ্টেৰ দৰ্শন তত্ত্বৰ অধ্যয়নশীল পণ্ডিতৰো হয় যথোচিত কাম, মই ক'ব লাগিব সেইখন দেশ ভাৰতেই। ইমানদিনে প্ৰায় আছুতীয়াকৈ গ্ৰীক, ৰোমান আৰু ছে'মিটিক সভ্যতাৰ অন্তৰ্গত ইহুদী জাতিৰ চিন্তাৰাজিৰে ইউৰোপক প্ৰতিপালন কৰি অহা হৈছে। আমি এতিয়া এই অৱস্থা শুধৰোৱাৰ ব্যৱস্থা লোৱা অতি প্ৰয়োজন। ই আমাৰ অন্তৰ্নিহিত জীৱন পূৰ্ণতৰ, অধিক সৰ্বাংগীন আৰু সাৰ্বজনীন কৰিব। দৰাচলতে যদিহে আমি মাথো ইহকালৰ বাবে নহয়, বৰঞ্চ পৰকালৰ বাবেও এক প্ৰকৃত মানৱ জীৱনৰ সন্ধান কৰোঁ, তেনেহ'লে তাৰ বাবেও মই ভাৰতবৰ্ষলৈকে আঙুলিয়াব লাগিব” (নেহৰু, ২০১৬, পৃ. ৯২)।

এই কেইটা মতাদৰ্শৰ ভিত্তিতেই উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি ভাৰতবৰ্ষ এনে এক পুণ্যভূমি, যাৰ ঐতিহ্য আৰু দৰ্শনে জ্ঞানৰ ধাৰাবাহিকতা সৃষ্টি কৰিছে। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় সভ্যতাৰ দৰ্শন, সাহিত্য, জীৱন শৈলীয়ে জ্ঞান আৰু ধৰ্মৰ শিপা মজবুত কৰি ভাৰতক সমৃদ্ধ কৰিছিল, যিয়ে আজিৰ আধুনিক ভাৰত নিৰ্মাণত অৰিহণা যোগাইছে। বেদ-বেদান্ত, পুৰাণ, উপনিষদ, মহাকাব্য আদিয়ে প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতত জীৱন আৰু কৰ্মৰ ঐতিহ্য বহন কৰে। জৱাহৰলাল নেহৰুৱে **The Discovery of India** ৰ চতুৰ্থ অধ্যায়ৰ মহাকাব্য, ইতিহাস, ঐতিহ্য আৰু পৌৰাণিক কাহিনীৰ বিষয়ত উল্লেখ কৰি কৈছে যে, অতি প্ৰাচীন কালৰে পৰাই ৰামায়ণ আৰু মহাভাৰত এই মহাকাব্য দুখনে এতিয়াও ভাৰতীয় জনসাধাৰণৰ জীৱনত জীৱন্ত শক্তিৰ উৎস হৈ আছে। ভাৰতবৰ্ষত জ্ঞান পৰম্পৰাৰ ভেঁটি নিৰ্মাণত এই ধৰ্ম গ্ৰন্থসমূহৰ বিশেষ অৱদান আছে। ধৰ্মীয় দৰ্শনৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পৰম্পৰাৰ ধাৰণাৰে আয়ুৰ্বেদ আৰু যোগ, গণিত আৰু জ্যোতিৰ্বিজ্ঞান, স্থাপত্য আৰু নগৰ পৰিকল্পনা, ভাষাবিজ্ঞান আৰু সাহিত্য, কলা-সংস্কৃতি, শাসন আৰু ৰাজনীতি আদি দিশসমূহ ওতঃপ্ৰোতভাৱে জড়িত আছে। গতিকে ভাৰতবৰ্ষ অতি প্ৰাচীন কালৰে পৰা বিকশিত হোৱা জ্ঞান অনুশীলন, চিন্তাধাৰাই ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান ব্যৱস্থাক প্ৰতিফলিত কৰে। এই ভাৰতীয়

জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি সাধাৰণতে এটা নিৰ্দিষ্ট বিষয়ত সীমাবদ্ধ হৈ নাথাকে। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পৰম্পৰাই জ্ঞানৰ প্ৰসাৰৰ মাধ্যমত পৃথিৱীখনক বুজি পোৱাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত সহায় কৰে। কাৰণ ই ব্যক্তি, সমাজ আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ মাজত সমন্বয় সাধনৰ দ্বাৰা সমাজৰ বিভিন্ন শাখাসমূহক আন্তঃসংযোগী কৰি তুলিছে। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি ধাৰণাটোত সাধাৰণতে তিনিটা দিশ জড়িত হৈছে (ক) ভাৰত, (খ) জ্ঞান আৰু (গ) পদ্ধতি। ভাৰত শব্দাংশই প্ৰাচীন অখণ্ড ভাৰতভূমিক প্ৰতিফলিত কৰে। অখণ্ড ভাৰতৰ ভৌগোলিক অৱস্থিতি, অঞ্চলটোৰ সাহিত্য সংস্কৃতি আৰু সামাজিক পৰম্পৰাই জ্ঞানৰ প্ৰচাৰ আৰু প্ৰসাৰৰ মাধ্যমেৰে আধুনিক ভাৰত নিৰ্মাণত সহায় কৰিছে। এক অৰ্থত ভাৰত 'জ্ঞান'ৰ পথ প্ৰদৰ্শক। কাৰণ প্ৰাচীন কালৰে পৰা ভাৰতভূমিত সংঘটিত ঘটনাবাজিয়ে সামাজিক, ৰাজনৈতিক উত্থান পতনে নতুন নতুন জ্ঞান অন্বেষণৰ সুবিধা প্ৰদান কৰিছে। জৱাহৰলাল নেহৰুৰ এষাৰ মন্তব্য এই দিশত উল্লেখযোগ্য, “বহু যুগৰ আগতে হোৱা অস্পষ্ট আৰম্ভণিৰ পৰা ভাৰতীয় চিন্তা আৰু দৰ্শন, সাহিত্য আৰু সংস্কৃতিৰ শ্ৰোতস্থিনীসমূহ বহুধা বিস্তৃত হৈ এই প্ৰবাহে কেতিয়াবা সমৃদ্ধ সঞ্চয়ৰে দেশখনক প্লাৱিত কৰিছে। সুদীৰ্ঘ কালৰ ব্যৱধানত সিহঁতে কেতিয়াবা কেতিয়াবা সঁতি সলাইছে, আনকি কেতিয়াবা শীৰ্ষৰূপ যোৱা যেন লাগিছে, তথাপি সিহঁতৰ মৌলিক চিনাকী অক্ষুণ্ণ ৰৈছে” (নেহৰু, ২০১৬, পৃ. ৮৩)। এই দিশৰ পৰা উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি ভাৰত জ্ঞান পৰম্পৰাৰ পূণ্যভূমি। দ্বিতীয়তে জ্ঞান, জ্ঞান অমৃত। যিদৰে দেৱ-দেৱতাই অমৃত পাণ কৰি অমৰত্ব লাভ কৰিছিল, ঠিক সেইদৰে জ্ঞানৰ দ্বাৰা ব্যক্তিসমূহে পৰমসত্য আৱিষ্কাৰ কৰিব পাৰিছিল। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় সভ্যতাত জ্ঞানৰ প্ৰবাহ বেদ, বেদান্ত, পুৰাণ, ধৰ্মগ্ৰন্থৰ মাধ্যমত প্ৰবাহিত হৈছিল। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় সভ্যতাৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি আধুনিক ভাৰতীয় সভ্যতা নিৰ্মাণত এই জ্ঞানে প্ৰভাৱ পেলাইছে। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞানৰ দিশত বেদৰ প্ৰসংগটো বিশেষভাৱে উল্লেখনীয়। বেদ মানে জ্ঞান, পৰম জ্ঞান। মনুৱে বেদক অখিল ধৰ্মৰ মূল বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে। ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰকাৰ গৌতমে ‘বেদো ধৰ্মমূলম্’ হিচাপে উল্লেখ কৰিছে। ধৰ্ম আৰু তৎসংশ্লিষ্ট কৰ্ম, কৰ্মফল, যজ্ঞ, যজ্ঞফল, স্বৰ্গ, পৰলোকত্ব, অদৃষ্ট ইত্যাদি ধৰ্মগত যাৱতীয় জ্ঞান আৰু ব্ৰহ্মা, মোক্ষ ইত্যাদি জ্ঞান একমাত্ৰ বেদৰ পৰাই লাভ কৰা যায় (বসু, ২০১৯, পৃ. ২৩)। *The Discovery of India* ত বেদৰ সম্পৰ্কে আলোচনা কৰি নেহৰুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছে যে, “বেদসমূহত বিস্তৃত হৈ আছে অসাধাৰণ জীৱনী শক্তি আৰু জীৱনৰ

পৰিচয়।” বেদৰ লগতে উপনিষদৰ প্ৰসংগত নেৰুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছে, “উপনিষদবোৰ জিঞ্জিৰাসাৰ মনোভাৱেৰে হোৱা প্ৰবৃত্তিৰ ফল। ই হ’ল সত্যৰ অন্বেষণত মানৱে পৰম আগ্ৰহেৰে কৰা মানসিক অভিযান। স্বাভাৱিকতে এই সত্যৰ অন্বেষণ আধুনিক বিজ্ঞানৰ বাস্তৱ পদ্ধতি অৱলম্বনেৰে হোৱা নাই, কিন্তু এই বিষয়ত অগ্ৰসৰ হোৱা পদ্ধতিত এক বৈজ্ঞানিক উপাদান লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়। কোনো মতবাদে বাধাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিবলৈকো দিয়া নাছিল। বহুতো সাধাৰণ, অথহীন আৰু আমাৰ বাবে এতিয়া অপ্ৰাসংগিক কথাও এই গ্ৰন্থবোৰত সন্নিবিষ্ট কৰা হৈছিল। উপনিষদত বিশেষভাৱে গুৰুত্ব দিয়া হৈছে আত্মোপলব্ধি আৰু মানৱাত্মা - পৰমাত্মা বিষয়ক জ্ঞান (নেহৰু, ২০১৬, পৃ. ৯২, ৯৩)। গতিকে জ্ঞানৰ প্ৰসংগত এই বেদ আৰু উপনিষদৰ উদাহৰণ দুটাৰ পৰাই স্পষ্ট যে জ্ঞানৰ দ্বাৰা বাস্তৱ জগতৰ লগত ব্যক্তিৰ সহবাস আৰু জীৱনৰ পৰিপূৰ্ণতা লাভৰ বিষয়টো জড়িত হৈ থাকে। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান প্ৰণালীৰ গুৰুত্ব এইখিনিতে। তৃতীয়তে প্ৰণালী (System) বা পদ্ধতিয়ে উপলব্ধি গঠনমূলক পদ্ধতি আৰু শ্ৰেণী বিভাজিত পৰিকাঠামোক প্ৰতিফলিত কৰে। অৰ্থাৎ প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় সভ্যতাৰ জ্ঞানৰ ব্যৱস্থা আৰু সেই জ্ঞানৰ অন্তৰ্নিহিত প্ৰকৃতি, সত্য, জ্ঞান অন্বেষণৰ আধাৰ আৰু উদ্দেশ্য আদিক সংঘৰ্ষ আৰু আন্তঃসংযোগী কৰি তোলাৰ দিশক প্ৰতিফলিত কৰে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে শূণ্যৰ আৱিষ্কাৰৰ পিছত ইয়াৰ সঠিক ব্যৱহাৰ কেনেদৰে কৰা হ’ব, তাৰ গুৰুত্ব আৰু ইয়াৰ গাণিতিক ব্যৱহাৰ কি হ’ব তাক প্ৰণালীৱদ্ধ অধ্যয়নৰ দ্বাৰা সম্ভৱ হৈ উঠিছিল। সেয়েহে, ভাৰতীয় প্ৰাচীন জ্ঞান ধাৰাৰ গুৰুত্ব বৰ্তমান সময়ত অধিক। বিশেষকৈ প্ৰাচীন জ্ঞান ধাৰাৰ দ্বাৰা পৰিচয় (Identity), সংস্কৃতি (Culture), জ্ঞান লাভ (Received wisdom) আৰু অৰ্থনৈতিক প্ৰমূল্য (Economic value) আদি দিশত তাৎপৰ্য আছে। সেয়েহে ভাৰতবৰ্ষত নতুনকৈ গ্ৰহণ কৰা নতুন ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় শিক্ষানীতি ২০২০ য়েও ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান প্ৰণালীক অগ্ৰাধিকাৰ প্ৰদান কৰিছে। ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় শিক্ষা নীতি ২০২০ ৰ অৱতৰণিকাত ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ প্ৰাচীন উন্নত জ্ঞানেই যে এই শিক্ষানীতিৰ পথ প্ৰদৰ্শক সেয়া স্পষ্টভাৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছে। এই ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় শিক্ষানীতিত উল্লেখ কৰিছে যে ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ প্ৰাচীন জ্ঞান পৰম্পৰাসমূহ বিশ্ব ঐতিহ্যৰ অংশস্বৰূপে কেৱল প্ৰদৰ্শনৰ বাবে পৰিচৰ্যা আৰু সংৰক্ষণ কৰাটোৱেই একমাত্ৰ উদ্দেশ্য নহয়। শিক্ষাৰ ব্যৱস্থাৰ মাধ্যমেদি এই সমূহৰ প্ৰচুৰ গৱেষণা, বিকাশ সাধন আৰু নতুন ধৰণে প্ৰয়োগ কৰাত গুৰুত্বাৰোপ কৰিছে। অৰ্থাৎ এই নতুন ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় শিক্ষা নীতি ২০২০

য়ে ভাৰতী জ্ঞান প্ৰণালীক শিক্ষাৰ এক অবিচ্ছেদ্য অংশ হিচাপে মান্যতা প্ৰদান কৰি দেশৰ প্ৰাচীন জ্ঞান-বিজ্ঞান, দৰ্শন আৰু মূল্যবোধক নতুনত্বৰে অধ্যয়নৰ এক পৰিবেশ ৰচনা কৰিব বিচাৰিছে।

ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান প্ৰণালীত মনু আৰু মনুস্মৃতি

মনু আছিল ভাৰতৰ প্ৰাচীনতম আইনৰ ভাষ্যকাৰ। পুৰাণৰ মতে মনু ব্ৰহ্মাৰ পুত্ৰ। কোনো কোনো পণ্ডিতৰ মতে মনু ব্যাসৰ স্মৃতিকাৰ শিষ্যহে। সৃষ্টিৰ আদিতে ব্ৰহ্মাই নিজ শৰীৰ স্ত্ৰী আৰু পুৰুষ দুটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰি বিৰাট পুৰুষ সৃষ্টি কৰিলে। সেই পুৰুষে তপস্যা কৰি সম্পূৰ্ণ ত্ৰিজগত সৃষ্টি কৰিবলৈ মনুক সৃষ্টি কৰিলে (বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ. পাতনি)। মনুৰ বিষয়ে বেদৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি স্মৃতিশাস্ত্ৰলৈকে উল্লেখ আছে। প্ৰাচীন ঋক্বেদত মনুৰ বিষয়ে উল্লেখ পোৱা যায়। ঋক্বেদৰ প্ৰথম মণ্ডলৰ এটা সুক্তত আছে, ‘যমার্থ বা মনুস্পিতা দধ্যঙ্ (১/৮০/১৬)। সেই মণ্ডলৰে আৰু এঠাইত আছে — যাভিঃ পুৰা মনৱে গাতুমীয়াথুঃ (১/১২/১৩)। এই মন্ত্ৰৰ ব্যাখ্যা নিৰুক্তত আছে — মনুঃ মননাৎ। তেষাম্ এষ নিপাতঃ। যাম্ অৰ্থবা চ মনুঃ চ পিতা মানৱানাং দধ্যঙ্ চ ধিয়ম (নিঃ ১২/৩৩-৩৪)। তৈত্তিৰিয় সংহিতাত আছে — নমঃ প্ৰজাপতয়ে মনৱে স্বাহা (৩/২/৮/১)। ইয়াত মনুক প্ৰজাপতি বুলি কোৱা হৈছে। (শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ. ০১৮)। অতি প্ৰাচীন বেদ-ব্ৰাহ্মণাদি গ্ৰন্থত মনুৰ নাম উল্লেখ আছে। বিশেষকৈ বশিষ্ঠ, গৌতম, আপস্তম্ব আদিয়ে তেওঁলোকে ৰচনা কৰা ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰসমূহৰ বহুখিনি মনুৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰণীত মানৱ ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰৰ পৰা আহৰণ কৰিছে বুলি স্বীকাৰ কৰিছে (শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ. ০১৯)। গতিকে মনুক প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতৰ প্ৰথম গৰাকী আইন প্ৰণেতা হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰা হয়। মনুৰ প্ৰসংগ আহিলেই মনুস্মৃতি বা মনুসংহিতাৰ কথা আহে। সাধাৰণতে স্মৃতি প্ৰধানত ওঠৰখন। যিকেইখনৰ ৰচয়িতা হ’ল — মনু, যাঞ্জবল্ক্য, বিষ্ণু, বৃহস্পতি, কাত্যায়ন, পৰাশৰ, গৌতম, অদ্ৰি, হাৰীত, ব্যাস, দক্ষ, ঔশনস, যম, আপস্তম্ব, বশিষ্ঠ, অঙ্গিৰা, ভৃগু আৰু নাৰদ। এই সকলো কেইখন স্মৃতিৰ ভিতৰত মনুৰ ‘মনুস্মৃতি’খনেই প্ৰাচীন আৰু পৰিপূৰ্ণ স্মৃতি হিচাপে গণ্য কৰা হয়। অৱশ্যে মনুৰ দ্বাৰা ৰচনা কৰা মনুস্মৃতিখন বহুসময়ত নানান নতুনত্ব হৈ আহিছে। মনুস্মৃতিখনৰ কথাখিনি মনুৰ শিষ্য ভৃগুমুনিৰ মুখেদিহে ব্যক্ত হৈছে। অৱশ্যে, মাজে মাজে কোনো বিষয় উত্থাপনৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত মহৰ্ষি ভৃগুৱে মনুৱে কৈছে

(মনুৰব্ৰবীৎ) বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে। মনুৰ এই মনুস্মৃতিখনত মানৱ জীৱনৰ সকলোবোৰ বিষয় সামৰি লোৱা আছে। মনুৰ এই মনুস্মৃতিত মুঠ বাৰটা অধ্যায় আছে। প্ৰথম অধ্যায়ত সৃষ্টিৰ ৰচনা আৰু প্ৰাণীৰ বৰ্ণনা আছে। বিশেষকৈ, মুনিসকলৰ ধৰ্মপ্ৰশ্ন, জগতৰ উৎপত্তি, বেদ সৃষ্টি, চতুৰ্ণৰ কৰ্তব্য, আচাৰ আদি সামৰি লৈছে। দ্বিতীয় অধ্যায়ত চাৰি আশ্ৰমৰ ধৰ্ম আদি আছে। তৃতীয় অধ্যায়ত চাৰি বৰ্ণৰ বিবাহৰ নিয়ম, প্ৰকাৰ, গৃহস্থৰ পঞ্চ মহাযজ্ঞ, আতিথ্য, সৎকাৰ আৰু শ্ৰাদ্ধ আদিৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। চতুৰ্থ অধ্যায়ত গৃহস্থৰ কৰ্তব্যৰ বিষয়ে বৰ্ণনা আছে। পঞ্চম অধ্যায়ত খাদ্য-অখাদ্য, দূষিত পদাৰ্থৰ বিশুদ্ধকৰণ, স্ত্ৰীধৰ্ম আদিৰ বিষয়ত বৰ্ণনা আছে। ষষ্ঠ অধ্যায়ত বানপ্ৰস্থ, যতি ধৰ্ম আৰু সন্ন্যাসৰ বিৱৰণ আছে আৰু সপ্তম অধ্যায়ত ৰাজধৰ্ম, দণ্ডবিধি, শত্ৰু-মিত্ৰৰ লক্ষণ আদিৰ বিষয়ে বৰ্ণনা আছে। অষ্টম অধ্যায়ত মেল-মোকদ্দমাৰ বিচাৰ, ওঠৰ বিধি বিবাদ, সাক্ষী, প্ৰমাণ, দণ্ডবিধান আদিৰ বিষয়ে উল্লেখ আছে। নৱম অধ্যায়ত স্ত্ৰী-পুৰুষৰ ধৰ্ম, স্ত্ৰী ৰক্ষা আৰু উপায় আদিৰ বিষয়ে আৰু দশম অধ্যায়ত ব্ৰাহ্মণৰ বিৱৰণ আছে। একাদশ আৰু দ্বাদশ অধ্যায়ত ব্ৰাহ্মণৰ অধ্যাপন কাৰ্য, দস্যুৰ লক্ষণ, বৰ্ণসংকৰ নিন্দা আদিৰ বিষয়ত বিৱৰণ আছে। একাদশ আৰু দ্বাদশ অধ্যায়ত ক্ৰমে স্নাতকৰ প্ৰকাৰ, বেদযজ্ঞলৈ দান, পাপ কাৰ্যৰ প্ৰায়চিত্ত, ভোজন প্ৰায়চিত্ত আদিৰ বিষয়ত আৰু শুভাৰম্ভ কৰ্মফল, ত্ৰিদণ্ড পৰিচয়, ক্ষেত্ৰজ্ঞ পৰিচয়, বেদজ্ঞ প্ৰশংসা, মনুসংহিতাৰ পাঠৰ ফল আদিৰ বিষয়ত বৰ্ণনা আছে। আলোচনাৰ সুবিধাৰ প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য ৰাখি মনুস্মৃতিৰ বৰ্ণনাত থকা ৰাজত্ব, শাসন ব্যৱস্থা আদি দিশসমূহক ইয়াত আলোচনা কৰা হ'ব।

মনু আৰু শাসন ব্যৱস্থা

মনুৰে মনুস্মৃতিৰ দ্বাৰা সমাজ জীৱনৰ পৰিচালিত দিশসমূহৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা কৰাৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে ৰাজধৰ্ম, ৰজাৰ দায়িত্ব আৰু কৰ্তব্য সম্পৰ্কে, ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ উৎপত্তি আদি ৰাজনৈতিক ব্যৱস্থা সম্পৰ্কে আলোচনা কৰিছে। শাসন ব্যৱস্থাৰ সম্পৰ্কীয় বিষয় —

ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ উৎপত্তি সম্পৰ্কত মনুৰ ধাৰণাঃ ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ উৎপত্তি বিষয়টোত বহু ৰাজনৈতিক চিন্তাবিদৰ ভিন্ন ধাৰণা দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। প্ৰাচ্য বা পাশ্চাত্যৰ বহু ৰাজনৈতিক বিশ্লেষকে ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ উৎপত্তিৰ বিষয়ত বিভিন্ন তত্ত্ব বা ধাৰণা আগবঢ়াইছে। সেই অনুসৰি ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ উৎপত্তিৰ সম্পৰ্কত ঐশ্বৰিক মতবাদৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি সামাজিক

চুক্তি তত্বলৈকে কেইবাটাও মতবাদ পোৱা যায়। ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতি দৃষ্টিকোণৰ পৰা ভাৰতীয় প্ৰেক্ষাপটত মনুৰ জগত সৃষ্টিৰ ধাৰণাটো সাধাৰণতে ৰাষ্ট্ৰসৃষ্টিৰ ঐশ্বৰিক মতবাদৰ লগত জড়িত কৰিব পাৰি। মনুস্মৃতিৰ প্ৰথম অধ্যায়তে সৃষ্টিৰ ৰচনা আৰু প্ৰাণীৰ উৎপত্তিৰ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ থকা অনুসৰি —

“আসীদিদং তমোভূতমপ্ৰজ্ঞাতমলক্ষণম্।

অপ্ৰতক্যমৰিজেয়ং প্ৰসুপ্তমিৰ সৰ্বতঃ।।৫।।

ততঃ স্বয়ংভূৰ্তগৰান ৰ্যক্তো ৰ্যঞ্জয়ন্নিদম্।

মহাভূতাদি বৃত্তোজাঃ প্ৰাদুৰাসীত্তমোমুদঃ।।৬।।”

(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃঃ০১)

অৰ্থাৎ প্ৰথমাবস্থাত এই জগতখন অন্ধকাৰত ডুবি আছিল। অনুমান কৰিব পৰা কোনো ৰূপেই নাছিল। সকলো অজ্ঞাত আৰু শূণ্য অৱস্থাত লুপ্ত আছিল। ইয়াৰ মাজৰ পৰাই স্বয়ম্ভু ভগৱানে মহাভূতাদি পঞ্চতত্ত্ব সৃষ্টি কৰি প্ৰকট হ’ল। ইয়াৰ পিছতেই সম্পূৰ্ণ সৃষ্টিৰ বাবে স্বয়ং ভগৱানৰ পৰা ব্ৰহ্মাৰ উৎপত্তি হ’ল। ব্ৰহ্মাৰ দ্বাৰা সংসাৰ বৃদ্ধিৰ বাবে ব্ৰাহ্মণ, বাহুৰ পৰা ক্ষত্ৰিয়, উৰুৰ পৰা বৈশ্য আৰু চৰণৰ পৰা শূদ্ৰক উৎপন্ন কৰিলে। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ থকা অনুসৰি —

“লোকানাং তু ৰিব্ৰুদ্যৰ্থ মুখ বাহুৰূপাদতঃ।

ব্ৰাহ্মণং ক্ষত্ৰিয়ং বৈশ্যং শূদ্ৰংচ নিৰৱৰ্ত্তয়ৎ।।৩।।”

(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.০৪)

এনেদৰে পৰ্যায়ক্ৰমে ব্ৰহ্মাৰ দ্বাৰা পৃথিৱীৰ ধাৰণাটোৰ সূচনা হ’ল। ৰাজনৈতিক দৃষ্টিকোণৰ পৰা মনুৰ ৰাষ্ট্ৰ সম্পৰ্কীয় ধাৰণা বিশ্লেষণ কৰিলে উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি যে “ধৰ্ম গ্ৰন্থ অনুসৰি জনতাই পৃথিৱীত হোৱা অন্যায়াৰ পৰা ৰক্ষা কৰিবৰ বাবে ঈশ্বৰৰ ওচৰত প্ৰাৰ্থনা জনাইছিল। সেই প্ৰাৰ্থনাৰ বাবেই ব্ৰহ্মাই মনুক প্ৰেৰণ কৰিছিল। ব্ৰহ্মাই মনুক ৰাষ্ট্ৰ পৰিচালনাৰ বাবে পৃথিৱীলৈ পঠাইছিল। কোঁটিল্যই অৰ্থশাস্ত্ৰত উল্লেখ কৰিছিল যে জনসাধাৰণে মনুক ৰজা হ’বলৈ প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিছিল। মনুৱে জনসাধাৰণক মৎস্য অন্যায়াৰ পৰা ৰক্ষা কৰিব বুলি ভাবি ৰজাৰ দায়িত্ব ল’বলৈ অনুৰোধ জনাইছিল।” (গোহাঁই, ২০১১, পৃ. ২২)। অৰ্থাৎ অন্ধকাৰ জগতক আৰু উচ্ছৃংখল পৰিৱেশত আইন-শৃংখলা বৰ্তাই ৰাখিবৰ বাবে আৰু দুষ্ট লোকক শাস্তি দিবৰ বাবে ব্ৰহ্মাই এজন ৰজা দিলে। মনুৱে

সেয়েহে উল্লেখ কৰিছে ৰাষ্ট্ৰখন ক্ৰমান্বয়ে বিকশিত হোৱা প্ৰতিষ্ঠান নাছিল, কিন্তু ই হঠাতে সৃষ্টি হৈছিল। মনুৰ মতে ৰাষ্ট্ৰ ব্যৱস্থা কেৱল মানুহৰ অৰ্থনৈতিক প্ৰগতিৰ বাবে হোৱা নাই, বৰঞ্চ মানুহৰ মাজত থকা অশুভ আৰু নিয়ন্ত্ৰণহীন অভ্যাসৰ সংস্কাৰৰ বাবে জন্ম হৈছিল। অৰ্থাৎ মনু ৰাষ্ট্ৰ উৎপত্তিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত ঐশ্বৰিক মতবাদ তত্ত্বৰ পূৰ্ণ সমৰ্থন আছিল। মনুৱে ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ সাতটা উপাদানৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। সেয়া হ'ল — (ক) স্বামী বা ৰজা, (খ) অমাত্য, (গ) পুৰা (ৰাজধানী), (ঘ) জনপদ, (ঙ) বালা (স্থায়ী সেনাবাহিনী), (চ) কোষ (ৰাজহ) আৰু (ছ) মিত্ৰ। ইয়াৰ লগতে মনুৱে স্থানীয় প্ৰশাসন আৰু সামৰিক প্ৰশাসনত গুৰুত্ব দিছিল। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ থকা অনুসৰি —

“ৰাষ্ট্ৰস্য সংগ্ৰহে নিত্যং বিধানমিদমাচৰেৎ।

সুসংগৃহীত ৰাষ্ট্ৰো হি পাৰ্থিৱঃ সুখমেধতে।।১১৩।।

দ্বয়োস্ত্ৰয়াণং পঞ্চনং মধ্যে গুল্মযধিষ্ঠিতম।

তথা গ্ৰামশতানাং চ কুৰ্যাদ্ৰাষ্ট্ৰস্য সংগ্ৰহম্।।১১৪।।

(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৬৭)

অৰ্থাৎ ৰাষ্ট্ৰ ৰক্ষাৰ বাবে ৰজাই সদায় উপায় বিচাৰিব। সুৰক্ষিত ৰাষ্ট্ৰই ৰজাক সুখ দিয়ে। দুখন, তিনিখন বা পাঁচখন গাঁৱৰ বা এশখন গাঁৱৰ ভিতৰত ৰাজ্য ৰক্ষাৰ বাবে শাসনকৰ্তা নিযুক্তি কৰিব। সেই ঠাইক গুল্ম বোলে। মনুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছিল যে ৰাষ্ট্ৰব্যৱস্থাৰ স্থানীয় প্ৰশাসনৰ প্ৰাথমিক গোট হ'ল গাঁও। ইয়াৰ এজন মুৰব্বী থাকিব। আকৌ দশ, বিশ, এশ আৰু হেজাৰ গাঁৱত একোজনকৈ অধিকাৰী বেলেগে বেলেগে নিযুক্তি দিব। মনুৱে এই দিশত শত গ্ৰামাধিপতি, সহস্ৰ গ্ৰামাধিপতি আদিৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। এই সকলোৱে ৰজাৰ আজ্ঞাত কৰ্তব্য পালন কৰিব। গতিকে ৰাষ্ট্ৰৰ ধাৰণাৰ দিশত মনুৱে ইয়াত প্ৰশাসনীয় ব্যৱস্থা আৰু সুৰক্ষাৰ ব্যৱস্থাটোৰ সম্পৰ্কে মনুস্মৃতিত বিস্তৃত বৰ্ণনা কৰিছিল। মনুৰ এই ৰাষ্ট্ৰ উৎপত্তি সম্পৰ্কীয় ধাৰণাই প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় ৰাজনৈতিক চিন্তাধাৰাক সমৃদ্ধ কৰে।

ৰজাত্বৰ ধাৰণাঃ

মনুস্মৃতিৰ সপ্তম অধ্যায়ত মনুৱে ৰাজধৰ্মৰ সম্পৰ্কে বৰ্ণনা কৰি ৰজাৰ বিভিন্ন দিশসমূহ আলোচনা কৰিছে। ৰজাৰ সৃষ্টিৰ সম্পৰ্কে মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ আছে

অৰাজকে হি লোকেহস্মিন্ সৰতো বিদ্রুতে ভয়াৎ ।
বক্ষার্থস্য সৰস্য ৰাজানমসৃজৎ প্রভুঃ ॥৩॥
ইন্দ্রানিলয় মার্কণামাগ্লেচ্চ বৰ্ণস্য চ ।
চন্দ্র রিতেশ্যোশৈচৰ মাত্ৰা নিৰ্হাত্য শাস্বতীঃ ॥৪॥

(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৫৩)

অৰ্থাৎ মনুৱে ৰজা সম্পৰ্কীয় দিশত উল্লেখ কৰিছে যে ৰাজ্য বা ৰাষ্ট্ৰ ব্যৱস্থা সৃষ্টি নোহোৱা অৱস্থাত মানুহ প্ৰকৃতিৰ ৰাজ্যত বসবাস কৰিছিল। কিন্তু প্ৰকৃতি ৰাজ্যখনৰ অৱস্থা সুস্থ নোহোৱাৰ বাবে মানুহৰ জীৱন বিপদাপন্ন হৈছিল। প্ৰকৃতি ৰাজ্যৰ এই জটিল পৰিস্থিতিৰ পৰা উপশম পাবলৈ ইয়াৰ সমাধান বিচাৰি মানুহে সৃষ্টিকৰ্তা ব্ৰহ্মাৰ ওচৰলৈ গ'ল আৰু ব্ৰহ্মাই শাস্তি প্ৰতিষ্ঠা, দুষ্টক দমন, শাস্তি প্ৰদান আৰু আইন শৃংখলা বজাই ৰাখিবৰ বাবে ৰজাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। মনুৰ এই ৰজাত্বৰ ধাৰণা সেয়ে ঈশ্বৰীয় মূল্যৰ লগত জড়িত আৰু ৰজাৰ দ্বাৰা ধাৰণা কৰা এই স্থিতিয়ে লোকসকলক তেওঁৰ প্ৰতি তেওঁলোকৰ আজ্ঞাবাহী প্ৰকাশ কৰিবলৈ বাধ্য কৰিছিল। মনুৱে কৈছিল যে যদিও ৰজা মানৱ ৰূপত দেখা যায়, তথাপি তেওঁ ঈশ্বৰৰ গুণাগুণৰ অধিকাৰী। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ আছে

“য়স্মাদেযাং সুৰেন্দ্ৰাণাং মাত্ৰাভ্যোনিৰ্মিতো নৃপঃ ।
তস্মাদভিভৱত্যেষু সৰ্বভূতানি তেজসা ॥৫॥”
(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৫৩)

অৰ্থাৎ যিহেতু ইন্দ্ৰাদি দেৱতাৰ অংশৰে ৰজাক নিৰ্মাণ কৰিলে, সেয়েহে ৰজাই সকলো প্ৰাণীক নিজৰ বশত ৰাখিব পাৰে। মনুৱে কৈছিল যে ৰজা হিন্দু দেৱ-দেৱতাৰ দৰে যেনে ইন্দ্ৰ, যম, বায়ু, সূৰ্য, চন্দ্ৰ, কুব্ৰেৰ, বৰ্ণ, অগ্নিৰ দৰে গুণ আছে। সেয়েহে ৰজাক পৃথিৱীৰ আঠজন অভিভাৱকৰ মূৰ্তি বুলি বৰ্ণনা কৰা হৈছিল। মনুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছিল যে ৰজাই ইচ্ছা কৰিলেই এই আঠ দেৱতাৰ ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰিব পাৰে। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ থকা মতে —

“সোহগ্নিৰ্ভৱতি বায়ুশ্চ সোৰ্হকঃ সোমঃ চ ধৰ্মৰাট্ ।
সু কুৰেৰঃ স বৰ্ণঃ স মহেন্দ্ৰঃ প্ৰভাৱতঃ ॥৯॥”
(শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ.১৯২)

মনুৱে মতপ্ৰকাশ কৰিছিল যে ঈশ্বৰৰ পিছতে ৰজাই সৰ্বশ্ৰেষ্ঠ স্থান দখল কৰে আৰু ৰজাই নিজকে প্ৰতিটো ক্ষেত্ৰতে নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰি ৰাখিব লাগিব।

মনুস্মৃতিত আছে —

“यस्य प्रसाद पद्माश्रीर्विजयश्च पवाक्रमे ।
 मृत्युश्च बसति क्रोधे सर्बते जोजयो हि सः ॥११ ॥
 तं यञ्जु द्वेष्टि संमोहात् स विनश्यत्यसंशयम् ।
 तस्य ह्यात विनाशाय राजा प्रकुरुते मनः ॥१२ ॥”
 (शर्मा, २०१५, पृ.१९२)

অর্থাৎ যাৰ প্ৰসাদত মহতী লক্ষ্মী লাভ হয়, যাৰ পৰাক্ৰমত বিজয় আৰু ক্ৰোধত মৃত্যু হয়, সেয়েই সৰোতেজোময় ৰজা। অজ্ঞানবশতঃ যিজনে ৰজাৰ শত্ৰুতা কৰে তেওঁ নিঃসন্দেহে বিনাশপ্ৰাপ্ত হয়। তেওঁক বিনাশ কৰিবলৈ ৰজাই শীঘ্ৰে নিজৰ মন নিযুক্তি কৰে। ইয়াৰ লগতে —

“तस्माद्धर्म युमिष्ठेषु स व्यरस्येन्मवाधिपः
 अनिष्ठं चाप्यनिष्ठेषु तं धर्मं स विचालयेत् ॥१३ ॥
 (शर्मा, २०१५, पृ.१९३)

মনুস্মৃতিত প্ৰকাশিত এই কেইটাৰ দিশৰ উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি যে মনুৱে ৰজাক সৰ্বশ্ৰেষ্ঠ হিচাপে প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিছে। এজন ৰজাই তেওঁৰ খং নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰি চলিব, জনসাধাৰণক প্ৰতিটো ক্ষেত্ৰতে সন্তুষ্ট কৰি ৰাখিব আৰু বল প্ৰয়োগৰ দ্বাৰা শাসন কাৰ্য পৰিচালনা কৰাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে সকলোৰে সন্মতিক্ৰমে ৰাজ্যখন শাসন কৰিব। ৰজাই সেইসমূহ গুণ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিব লাগিব যিবোৰৰ দ্বাৰা নাগৰিক সন্তুষ্ট হয় আৰু ৰজাৰ আজ্ঞা পালন কৰিবলৈ বাধ্য হয়। গতিকে ৰজা নশ্ৰ, ভদ্ৰ, আনন্দময়ী আচৰণৰ দ্বাৰা বুদ্ধিমত্তাৰে শাসন কাৰ্য সম্পাদন কৰিব লাগিব। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ থকা অনুসৰি —

“यत श्यामा लोहितान्क्शा दण्डम चरित पापहा ।
 प्रजाः तत्र न मुह्यन्ति चेत्साधु पश्याति ॥२५ ॥
 तस्याहः संप्रणेतारं राजानं सत्यवादिनम् ।
 समीक्ष्य कारिणं प्राञ्जं धर्मकार्थं कोरिदम् ॥२६ ॥”

অৰ্থাৎ যত পাপ নাশক শ্যামৱৰ্ণ (ভয়ানক) আৰু ৰক্তনেত্ৰ (তেজস্বী) দণ্ড থাকে আৰু দণ্ড দিওঁতাই (ৰজাই) যদি ন্যায়েৰে নিজৰ কাৰ্য কৰে তেতিয়া প্ৰজা কেতিয়াও ব্যাকুল নহয়। সত্যবাদী, বিচাৰ কৰিব পৰা, বুদ্ধিমান আৰু যিজনে ধৰ্ম, অৰ্থ আৰু কৰ্মৰ বিষয়ে সম্পূৰ্ণ জানে, তেওঁৰেই ৰজা। (বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৫৬)

দেশ তথা সমাজৰ সুস্থ পৰিচালনাৰ বাবে ৰজাই বিশেষ ছটা গুণ পৰিহাৰ কৰি চলা উচিত যেনে — কামনা, ক্ৰোধ, লোভ, মোহ, ঈৰ্ষা আৰু গৌৰৱ। এই ছটা দিশত ৰজাই নিজক নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ ৰাখিব পাৰিলেই সমাজত কল্যাণ নিশ্চিত হ'ব বুলি মনুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। ৰজাই শাসনৰ বাবে কৰ্তৃত্ব ভগৱান ব্ৰহ্মাৰ পৰা পালে আৰু শাসনকাৰ্য পৰিচালনাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত ব্ৰাহ্মণসকলৰ নিৰ্দেশনা মানি চলিব লাগে। কাৰণ ব্ৰাহ্মণসকলৰ জ্ঞান আছে আৰু সেই জ্ঞানেই শাসন। মনুস্মৃতিত আছে —

“সৰ্বেষাং তু বিশিষ্টেন ব্ৰাহ্মণেন ৰিপশ্চিতা

মন্ত্ৰয়েৎপৰমং মন্ত্ৰং ৰাজা যাড়ুগুণ্য সংযুতম।।৫৮।।

অৰ্থাৎ মন্ত্ৰীসকলৰ ভিতৰত যিজন ব্ৰাহ্মণ, বিশেষভাৱে বিদ্বান আৰু বিশিষ্ট, ৰজাই তেওঁৰ লগত সন্ধি, বিগ্ৰহ আদি ৰাজ্যৰ ছয়গুণৰ যুক্ত বিষয়বোৰৰ মন্ত্ৰণা কৰিব (বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৬০)। ইয়াৰ লগতে মনুস্মৃতিত ৰজাই কোনধৰণৰ ব্যক্তিক মন্ত্ৰী, ৰাজদূত, সেনাপতিৰ দায়িত্ব দিব আৰু কাৰ হাতত কি দায়িত্ব থাকিব সেই সম্পৰ্কত ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে। মনুস্মৃতিৰ মতে —

“নিত্যং তস্মিন সমাশস্তঃ সৰকাৰ্যাণি নিঃক্ষিণেৎ।

তেনে সাক্ষৰ্ণ ৰিনিশ্চিত্য ততঃকৰ্ম সমাৰভেৎ।।৫৯।।

অন্যানপি প্ৰকুৰীতু শুচিন্ প্ৰাজ্ঞানৱস্থিতান্।

সম্যগৰ্থ সমাহৰ্তৃমাত্যান সুপৰীক্ষিতান।।৬০।।”

“নিৰৰ্তেতাস্য যাৱস্থিৰিতি কৰ্তব্যতা নৃভিঃ।

তাৱতোহতদ্ভিতান্দক্ষান্ প্ৰকুৰীতি ৰিচক্ষণান।।৬১।।”

তেষামৰ্থে নিযুক্তীত শূৰান্দক্ষান্ কুলোদগতান।

শূচীনা কৰকৰ্মাস্তে ভীৰুনন্তুৰ্নিৰেশানে।।৬২।।”

“দূতং চৈৱ প্ৰকুৰীত সৰ্বশাস্ত্ৰৰিশাৰদম।

ইংগিতাকাৰচেষ্টজ্ঞং শূচিং দক্ষং কুলোদগতম্।।৬৩।।”

“অমাত্যে দণ্ড আয়ত্তো দণ্ডে ৰৈনয়িকী ক্ৰিয়া।

নৃপতৌ কৌশৰাষ্ট্ৰে চ দূতে সন্ধি ৰিপৰ্যযৌ।।৬৫।।

দূত এৱহি সংধন্তে ভিনন্তোৱ চ সংহতান্।

দূতস্তৎকুৰতে কৰ্ম ভিদ্যন্তে যেন মানৱাঃ।।৬৬।।”

(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৬০-১৬১)

অৰ্থাৎ ৰজাই ব্ৰাহ্মণ সচিবজনক সদায় বিশ্বাস কৰি সকলো কাৰ্যৰ

ভাৰ তেওঁৰ ওপৰত এৰি দি তেওঁৰ লগতেই সকলো কাৰ্য আৰম্ভ কৰিব। পবিত্ৰ, বুদ্ধিমান, ন্যায়পূৰ্বক ধন উপাৰ্জন কৰিব পৰা, ধাৰ্মিক আৰু বোধশক্তিযুক্ত লোক পৰীক্ষা কৰি অন্য মন্ত্ৰীসকলক নিযুক্তি কৰিব। বজাসকলে নিজৰ কাৰ্য সম্পাদন কৰিবৰ বাবে যিমান মানুহৰ আৱশ্যক সিমান আলস্যহীন, কাৰ্যদক্ষ আৰু বিচক্ষণ মানুহক নিযুক্তি দিব। জন্মৰ পৰা বীৰ দক্ষ আৰু মহান কুলত জন্মাসকলক ৰাজ্যৰ সম্পত্তি আৰু সোণ-ৰূপৰ খনিৰ আৰু খাদ্যৰ স্থানত নিযুক্তি দিব আৰু ভীৰু স্বভাৱযুক্তসকলক ৰাজভৱনৰ কিছুমান সহজ কামৰ ভাৰ দিব। যিজন সকলো শাস্ত্ৰত পাৰ্গত, ইঞ্জিত, আকাৰ আৰু চেপ্টাৰে আনৰ মনৰ ভাৰ বুজিব পাৰে, পবিত্ৰ চৰিত্ৰ, চতুৰ আৰু উন্নত কুলৰ তেওঁক ৰাজদূতৰ কামত নিয়োগ কৰিব। ৰাজ্যৰ সৈন্যৰ আৰু আভ্যন্তৰীণ শাস্ত্ৰৰ ভাৰ সেনাপতিৰ হাতত থাকিব। ৰাজকোষ আৰু ৰাজ্যৰ ভাৰ ৰজাৰ হাতত থাকিব। যুদ্ধ আৰু শাস্ত্ৰৰ ঘোষণা ৰাজদূতৰ হাতত থাকিব। দূতেই শত্ৰুপক্ষৰ লগত মিলন কৰাব পাৰে, মিলিত পক্ষক ভাঙিব পাৰে। দূতে শত্ৰুপক্ষৰ জনবল ছিন্ন ভিন্ন কৰিব পাৰে। (বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৬০-১৬১)

ইয়াৰ লগতে ৰজা কেনে পৰিৱেশ বা দেশত বসবাস কৰা উচিত সেই বিষয়ে মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ আছে —

“জাংগলং শস্যসংপন্নমায়্য প্রায়মনাৱিলম্।

ৰম্যমানত সামন্তং স্বাজীৱ্যং দেশমাৱসেৎ।।৬১।।

ধন্য দুৰ্গং মহীদুমিন্দুৰ্পং বাৰ্ম্মাৱেৰ বা।

নৃদুৰ্গং গিৰিদুৰ্গং বা সমাশিত্য ৰসেৎপুৰম্।।৭০।।

অৰ্থাৎ ধন-ধানশালী; বহুতো ধাৰ্মিক লোক থকা, বেমাৰ-আজাৰ নথকা, আশে-পাশে নন্দলোক বাস কৰা, কৃষি আৰু বাণিজ্য সুলভ, ফল-ফুলেৰে ৰমণীয়, প্ৰচুৰভাৱে তৃণ-লতা থকা স্থানত ৰজাই বাস কৰিব। ৰজাই ধন্যদুৰ্গ (মৰুভূমি ৰেপ্তিত), মহীদুৰ্গ (শিলেপ্তিত) তনৱদুৰ্গ (জলেৰে ৰেপ্তিত), বৃক্ষদুৰ্গ, নৃদুৰ্গ (সেনাৰে ৰেপ্তিত) বা গিৰি দুৰ্গ (পৰ্বতৰেপ্তিত) ক আশ্ৰয় কৰি কাজ কৰিব (শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ.২০২)।

ৰাজশাসনৰ এই দিশসমূহৰ লগতে মনুৱে ৰজাৰ মন্ত্ৰী পৰিষদৰ সম্পৰ্কে ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে। মনুৱে ক’ব বিচাৰে যে, ৰজাৰ বাবে মন্ত্ৰী পৰিষদখন ৰজাৰ বাহু, চকু আৰু কাণৰ দৰে। তেওঁ কৈছিল মন্ত্ৰীপৰিষদ অবিহনে এজন ৰজা চকা অবিহনে ৰথ চলোৱাৰ দৰে। মন্ত্ৰীপৰিষদৰ আকাৰৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত উল্লেখ কৰিছিল

যে, মন্ত্রী পৰিষদৰ আকাৰ এক আদৰ্শ সংখ্যা সাতৰ পৰা আঠজনতকৈ বেছি হ'ব নালাগে। এই মন্ত্রী পৰিষদৰ সদস্যসকলে ৰজাক তেওঁৰ দায়িত্ব পালনত সামূহিক আৰু ব্যক্তিগতভাৱে সহায় কৰাৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে দৈনিক কাৰ্য পালনত পৰামৰ্শ প্ৰদান কৰিব। মন্ত্রী পৰিষদৰ গঠনৰ ওপৰত পৰামৰ্শ দিয়াৰ লগতে মন্ত্রী পৰিষদৰ কিছুমান গুণ থাকিব লাগিব বুলি মনুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছিল। সেই অনুসৰি মন্ত্রী পৰিষদৰ মন্ত্ৰীসকল উচ্চ শিক্ষিত, দক্ষ হ'ব লাগিব, জন্মসূত্ৰে উচ্চ জাতৰ হ'ব লাগিব, ভাল যোদ্ধা হোৱাৰ লগতে যুদ্ধৰ ৰণকৌশল সম্পৰ্কে তীক্ষ্ণ জ্ঞান থাকিব লাগিব আৰু ৰাজ্য ব্যৱস্থা সম্পৰ্কে, পৰিচালনা সম্পৰ্কীয় জ্ঞান থাকিব লাগিব। ইয়াৰোপৰি এজন মন্ত্ৰীয়ে ৰজা আৰু তেওঁৰ প্ৰজাসকলৰ মাজত কোনো অসন্তুষ্টি সৃষ্টি নকৰাকৈ এজন সৎ মধ্যস্থতাকাৰী হিচাপে প্ৰমাণিত হ'ব লাগিব। মনুৱে উল্লেখ কৰা অনুসৰি মন্ত্ৰীসকল দুই শ্ৰেণীৰ লোকক লৈ গঠিত। প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীৰ মন্ত্ৰী বংশানুক্ৰমিক নীতিৰ দ্বাৰা বাছনি হ'ব আৰু দ্বিতীয় শ্ৰেণীৰ মন্ত্ৰীক বুদ্ধিমত্তা আৰু কাৰ্যদক্ষতাৰ ভিত্তিত নিযুক্তি দিব লাগিব। মন্ত্ৰী নিযুক্তি বা নিৰ্বাচন কৰোঁতে ৰজাই তেওঁৰ বিশ্বাসী বন্ধু বা আত্মীয়সকলৰ পৰামৰ্শ ল'ব লাগে। মহৎ চৰিত্ৰৰ ব্যক্তিক ৰজাই গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ পদবীত নিযুক্তি দিব।

গতিকে, মনুৱে মনুস্মৃতিৰ সপ্তম অধ্যায়ত ৰজাৰ কৰণীয় দায়িত্ব আৰু কৰ্তব্য সম্পৰ্কীয় দিশ আলোচনা কৰি ৰাষ্ট্ৰ তথা চৰকাৰ পৰিচালনাৰ বিভিন্ন দিশসমূহ ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে। এই দিশসমূহে আধুনিক ৰাষ্ট্ৰ প্ৰশাসন, পৰিচালনাৰ দিশত কিছু প্ৰাসংগিকতা আছে।

আইন সম্পৰ্কীয় নীতিঃ

মনুৰ মনুস্মৃতিখন ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে আইন শাস্ত্ৰ হিচাপে ভাৰতীয় সমাজত প্ৰচলিত। মনুক প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতৰ আইন স্ৰষ্টা হিচাপে গণ্য কৰা হয়। মনুস্মৃতিৰ প্ৰথম অধ্যায়ৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি দ্বাদশ অধ্যায়লৈকে বিভিন্ন আইনৰ সম্পৰ্কে বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। বিশেষকৈ মনুস্মৃতিৰ অষ্টম অধ্যায়টোত মেল-মোকদ্দমাৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি সীমাবিবাদ, দানবিধি, কৰ্মবিধি আদি সকলো আইন নীতি সম্পৰ্কে ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে। সাধাৰণতে মনুৰ মনুস্মৃতিখনৰ মাধ্যমতেই ভাৰতীয় আইন তথা সমাজ ব্যৱস্থাৰ সামাজিক গাঁথনি তৈয়াৰ হৈছে। অৱশ্যে ইয়াত কিছু পৰিৱৰ্তন আৰু পৰিৱৰ্তন হৈছে। তথাপি ভাৰতীয় সমাজত মনুস্মৃতিৰ প্ৰভাৱ আছে। গতিকে মনুস্মৃতিয়ে প্ৰদান কৰা জীৱন শৈলীয়ে আইন আৰু

সেই আইনকে মনুৱে ধৰ্ম হিচাপে বিবেচনা কৰিছিল। মনুৱে দাবী কৰিছিল যে আইন ঈশ্বৰৰ সৃষ্টি। মনুৰ মনুস্মৃতিত প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত প্ৰথাৰ বিষয়ে কোৱা হৈছে য'ত জাতি, ঘৰুৱা ৰীতি-নীতি, অস্ত্ৰোপস্থিক্ৰিয়া, পুৰুষ আৰু ঈশ্বৰৰ প্ৰতি অপবাদ আৰু ধৰ্ম নিৰপেক্ষ, আইনৰ বিষয়ত ধৰ্মীয় আৰু দাৰ্শনিক দিশ অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত আছে। মনুৱে সদায় বেদৰ দৰ্শন আৰু অন্তৰআত্মাৰ মতে জীৱন শৈলীৰ ওপৰত গুৰুত্বাৰোপ কৰিছিল আৰু তাৰ দ্বাৰা সামাজিক শৃংখলা প্ৰতিষ্ঠাত প্ৰাধান্য দিছিল। মনুৱে আইনক ওঠৰটা ভাগত ভাগ কৰে, যাক ব্যৱহাৰাপদ (Vyavaharapada) হিচাপে অভিহিত কৰিছিল। মনুস্মৃতি অষ্টম অধ্যায়ত উল্লেখ আছে —

“তেষামাদ্যম্ণাদানং নিষ্কেপোহস্বামি ৱিক্ৰয়ঃ।

সংভূয় চ সনুখান, দত্তস্যানপকৰ্ম চ।।৪।।

ৱেতনস্যৈৱ চাদানং সংৱিদশ্চ ব্যতিক্ৰম।।

ক্ৰয়ৱিক্ৰয়ানুশয়ো ৱিবাদঃ স্বামি পালয়োঃ।।৫।।

সীমাৱিবাদধৰ্মশ্চ পাৰুষ্যে দগুৰাচিকে।

স্ত্বেয়ংচ সাহসং চৈৱ স্ত্ৰীসংগ্ৰহণমেৱ চ।।৬।।

স্ত্ৰী পুং ধৰ্মো ৱিভাগশ্চ, দ্যুতমাহুৱ এৱ চ।

পদান্যষ্টাদশৈতানি ব্যৱহাৰ স্থিতাৱিহ।।৭।।”

(বৰুৱা, ২০০৩, পৃ.১৮৩)

অৰ্থাৎ ওঠৰ বিধ আইনৰ ভাগ হ'ল — (১) ঋণ দিয়া আৰু লোৱা, (২) কাৰোবাৰ ওচৰত ভৰসা কৰি জমা ৰখা, (৩) মালিকে নজনাকৈ কিনা বস্তু বেচা, (৪) ব্যৱসায়ৰ অংশীদাৰ, (৫) দিয়া বস্তু ঘূৰাই লোৱা, (৬) মজুৰি পৰিশোধ নকৰা, (৭) প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি ৰক্ষা নকৰা, (৮) কিনা বেচাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত দিওঁতে বা লওঁতে হোৱা ব্যতিক্ৰম, (৯) গোগৃহস্থী আৰু গো পালকৰ বিবাদ, (১০) মাটিৰ সীমাৰ বিবাদ, (১১) গালি পৰা আৰু মাৰপিট কৰা, (১২) চুৰি কৰা, (১৩) ডকাইত কৰা, (১৪) পৰপুৰুষৰ লগত স্ত্ৰীৰ সম্পৰ্ক, (১৫) স্ত্ৰী পুৰুষৰ পৰস্পৰ কৰ্তব্য সম্বন্ধীয়, (১৬) পৈত্ৰিক সম্পত্তিৰ বিভাজন, (১৭) জুৱা খেল আৰু (১৮) পশু-পক্ষীৰ যুঁজ কৰোওৱা, ব্যৱহাৰ আদি।

আইনৰ এই বিভাগসমূহৰ দ্বাৰা মনুৱে সামাজিক শৃংখলাৰ সুবিধাৰ বাবে সূচনা কৰিছিল। যাতে ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা সামাজিক ক্ষেত্ৰত ন্যায় আৰু সমতা প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰিব পৰা যায়। সেয়েহে মনুৱে ন্যায় উলংঘা কৰাটোক ঘৃণনীয় আখ্যা

দিছিল। সমাজত যাতে ন্যায় প্রতিষ্ঠা হয় তাৰ দায়িত্ব বজাক প্ৰদান কৰিছে আৰু বিবাদৰ উৎপত্তি হোৱা এই ওঠৰটা বিষয়ত বিবাদ নিস্পত্তি কৰিবৰ বাবে বজাই নিত্যধৰ্ম বিবেচনা কৰি ন্যায় বিচাৰ কাৰ্য কৰিব বুলি মনুৱে মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ কৰিছে। মনুস্মৃতিত আছে —

“এষু স্থানেষু ভূযিষ্ঠং বিবাদং চৰতাং নৃপাম।

ধৰ্মং শাস্ত্ৰতমাশ্ৰিত্য কুৰ্যাৎ কাৰ্যবিৰ্নিৰ্ণয়ম।।৮।।”

(শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ.২৩০)

মনুস্মৃতিত এই কথাও উল্লেখ আছে যে যদি কোনো কাৰণতে বজা ন্যায় প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ কাৰ্যত জড়িত হ'ব নোৱাৰে, তেন্তে সেই কাৰ্য এগৰাকী বিদ্যান ব্ৰাহ্মণক নিযুক্তি দিব লাগে। বিবাদ নিস্পত্তিৰ দিশত মনুৱে সাক্ষী প্ৰয়োগৰ দিশটোক উল্লেখ কৰিছে। বজাই কাক সাক্ষী হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰিব লাগে আৰু কাক সাক্ষী হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰিব নালাগে সেই বিষয়ে মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ আছে। মনুস্মৃতিত উল্লেখ থকা অনুসৰি —

“আপ্তাঃ সৰ্ৱেষু ৰৰ্ণেষু কাৰ্যাঃ কায়েষু সক্ষিণঃ।

সৰধৰ্মৱিদোহলুন্ধা ৰিপৰীতাংস্তু ৰজ্জয়েৎ।।৬৩।।”

অৰ্থাৎ সকলো বৰ্ণতে নিৰপেক্ষ জ্ঞান থকাজনক সৰ্বধৰ্মজ্ঞাতা তথা নিৰ্লোভীজনক সাক্ষী কৰিব লাগে। (শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ.২৩৯)।

ইয়াৰ লগতে কাক সাক্ষী ল'ব নালাগে মনুস্মৃতিত আছে —

“নাৰ্থসম্বন্ধিনো নাপ্তা ন সহায়ান ৰৈৰিণঃ।

ন দৃষ্টদোষীঃ কৰ্তব্যান ব্যাধ্যাতা ন দূষিতাঃ।।৬৪।।”

“ন সাক্ষী নৃপতিঃ কাৰ্যো ন কাৰককুলীলৰৌ।

ন শ্ৰোত্ৰিয়ো ন লিঙ্গস্থো ৰ সঙ্গ্ৰেভ্যো ৰিনিৰ্গতঃ।।৬৫।।”

“ন্যাধ্যয়ীনো ন ৰঞ্জৰ্যো ন দস্যুৰ্ন ৰিকৰ্মকৃৎ।

ন বৃদ্ধো ন শিশুৰ্নৈকো ন্যস্ত্যো ন ৰিকলেদ্ৰিয়ঃ।।৬৬।।”

(শৰ্মা, ২০১৫, পৃ.২৪০)

অৰ্থাৎ ঋণ দিয়া বা লোৱা জনৰ আত্মীয়, মিছা সাক্ষী দিয়া, বেমাৰী, মহাপাপী, কোনো বজা, কমাৰ, মিস্ত্ৰী, নট-নৰ্তকী, বৈদিক ব্ৰহ্মাচাৰী, সন্ন্যাসী, চোৰ, আনৰ অধীন লোক, চণ্ডাল, অকলশৰীয়া পাগল আদি লোকক সাক্ষী কৰাৰ পৰা বিৰত ৰাখিব লাগে। ইয়াৰ লগতে দোষীক শাস্তিৰ বিধানৰ দিশটোক মনুৱে অগ্ৰাধিকাৰ দিছে। এনেদৰেই মনুৱে মনুস্মৃতিৰ দ্বাৰা আইনৰ পদ্ধতিগত

ভাৱে ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছিল। এই আইনৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰিয়েই আধুনিক ভাৰতৰ ন্যায়ৰ ধাৰণাৰ বিকাশ সাধন হৈছে বুলিব পাৰি।

এই আইনগত দিশটোৰ লগতে এখন ৰাষ্ট্ৰ পৰিচালনাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত প্ৰয়োজনীয় দিশ বা নীতিসমূহৰ বিষয়ে মনুষ্মৃতিত উল্লেখ আছে। বিশেষকৈ মনুৱে উল্লেখ কৰিছিল যে চৰকাৰী নীতিসমূহ ৰাজহুৱা নিৰাপত্তা আৰু আন্তঃৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় সম্পৰ্ক এই দুটা দিশত ভাগ কৰিছে। আন্তঃৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় সম্পৰ্ক প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ দিশত মনুৱে ছটা নীতিৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে। সেইয়া হ'ল — সন্ধি, বিগ্ৰহ, আসন, যান, সমশ্ৰায়া আৰু দ্বৈধিভাৱ। ইয়াৰ লগতে মনুষ্মৃতিত ৰাজ্যৰ প্ৰতিকূল পৰিস্থিতিৰ মোকাবিলা কৰাৰ দিশত কিছুমান কাৰ্যবিধিৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে—

- (১) প্ৰথম নীতি অনুসৰি ভৱিষ্যতে সুফল তথা লাভালাভ আৰু আধিপত্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠাৰ বিষয়ে নিশ্চিত হ'লে ৰজাই শান্তিৰ প্ৰস্তাৱ প্ৰেৰণ কৰা উচিত।
- (২) শত্ৰু পক্ষক পৰাজিত কৰিব পৰাকৈ ৰজাই যদি নিজক বলী বুলি জ্ঞান কৰে তেন্তে ৰজাই শত্ৰুৰ বিৰুদ্ধে যুদ্ধ কৰা উচিত।
- (৩) যেতিয়া ৰজাৰ সৈন্যবাহিনীয়ে ৰজাৰ সৈতে পূৰ্ণ সহযোগিতা কৰে তেতিয়াই শত্ৰুৰ বিপক্ষে ৰজাই আগবাঢ়ি যোৱা উচিত।
- (৪) ৰজা যেতিয়া ৰথ আৰু সৈন্য বাহিনী দুয়োটা বিভাগতে দুৰ্বল হয় তেতিয়া তেওঁ নিৰপেক্ষ ভূমিকা পালন কৰা উচিত।
- (৫) যেতিয়াই ৰজাই উপলব্ধি কৰে যে, শত্ৰু পক্ষ সকলো দিশৰ পৰা শক্তিশালী তেনে অৱস্থাত ৰজাই যুঁজিবৰ বাবে তেওঁৰ সৈন্যবাহিনীত বিভিন্ন ভাগত বা গোটত বিভক্ত কৰি ল'ব লাগে।
- (৬) ৰজাই যেতিয়া শত্ৰু পক্ষৰ হাতত অতি সহজে পৰাজিত হ'ব বুলি অনুভৱ কৰে তেন্তে ৰজা শক্তিশালী আৰু সমৃদ্ধিশালী ৰজাৰ ওচৰত শৰণাপন্ন হ'ব লাগে।

সামৰণি :

মনুৰ মনুষ্মৃতিয়ে ভাৰতীয় প্ৰাচীন আইনশাস্ত্ৰ বা ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰ হিচাপে ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিক সমৃদ্ধ কৰিছে। প্ৰাচীন আইনশাস্ত্ৰ হিচাপে মনুষ্মৃতিৰ আধাৰত প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতত প্ৰচলিত আদৰ্শ, চিন্তাধাৰা, ন্যায় নীতি, ৰাজনৈতিক কাঠামো আদি বিষয়ত জানিব পাৰি। যিসমূহে আধুনিক ভাৰতীয় সমাজ আৰু আইন নিৰ্দ্ধাৰণত প্ৰভাৱ পেলাইছিল। অৱশ্যে বহু প্ৰেক্ষাপটত মনুষ্মৃতিক

সমালোচনা কৰা হয়। বিশেষকৈ শূদ্রসকলৰ প্ৰতি কৰা অন্যায় আৰু বৈষম্যমূলক আচৰণৰ বাবে আৰু অন্য কিছুমান কাৰণত মনুস্মৃতিৰ সমালোচনা কৰা হয়। ড০ বি. আৰ. আশ্বেদকাৰে কৈছিল, “এইটো শুদ্ধ নহয় যে মনুস্মৃতিৰ সকলো অংশ নিন্দনীয়, ইয়াৰ যে ভাল নীতি নাছিল সেইটোও শুদ্ধ নহয়। (গোহাঁই, ২০২২, পৃ.১৯০)। এই আলোচনাৰ ভিত্তিত উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি যে

- (১) ভাৰতীয় জ্ঞান পদ্ধতিত ৰাজনৈতিক বা সামাজিক প্ৰেক্ষাপটৰ ভিত্তিত ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰ আৰু আইনশাস্ত্ৰ হিচাপে মনুস্মৃতিৰ এক ঐতিহাসিক প্ৰমূল্য আছে।
- (২) মনুস্মৃতিত বৰ্ণিত ৰাষ্ট্ৰ উৎপত্তি, ৰাষ্ট্ৰ ব্যৱস্থা, বজা আৰু আইন সম্পৰ্কীয় নীতিয়ে আধুনিক ভাৰতীয় আইন প্ৰণয়ন ব্যৱস্থাত প্ৰভাৱ পেলাইছিল। মনুস্মৃতিয়ে প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় চৰকাৰ পদ্ধতি বা প্ৰশাসনীয় দিশত প্ৰভাৱ বিস্তাৰ কৰিছিল।
- (৩) প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় সমাজ ব্যৱস্থাত ধৰ্ম আৰু ন্যায় নীতিৰ যে প্ৰাসংগিকতা আছিল তাৰ প্ৰমাণ মনুস্মৃতি। মনুৰ মনুস্মৃতিখন ধৰ্মশাস্ত্ৰ, আইন শাস্ত্ৰ, মানৱশাস্ত্ৰ হোৱাৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে এখন প্ৰণালীৱদ্ধ ৰাজনৈতিক শাস্ত্ৰ হিচাপে অভিহিত কৰিব পাৰি।

সহায়ক গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী :

- (১) বৰুৱা, প্ৰফুল্ল নাৰায়ণ (অনুবাদক), ‘মনুসংহিতা’, ডিব্ৰুগড়ঃ কৌস্তভ প্ৰকাশন, ২০১৩
- (২) শৰ্মা, কিৰণ (অনুবাদক), ‘মনুসংহিতা’, গুৱাহাটীঃ চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰকাশ, ২০১৫
- (৩) নেহৰু, জৱাহৰলাল, ‘ভাৰতৰ সন্ধানত’, অনুবাদক ভূবন চন্দ্ৰ বৰা, গুৱাহাটীঃ ষ্টুডেণ্ট ষ্ট’ৰচ, ২০১৬
- (৪) বসু, ড০ যোগীৰাজ, ‘বেদৰ পৰিচয়’, গুৱাহাটীঃ অসম প্ৰকাশন পৰিষদ, ২০১৯
- (৫) গোহাঁই, নবীন আৰু অন্যান্য, ‘ভাৰতীয় ৰাজনৈতিক চিন্তাধাৰা’, যোৰহাটঃ বিদ্যাভৱন, ২০২২
- (৬) দাস, ড০ দীপেন আৰু অন্যান্য, ‘ভাৰতীয় ৰাজনৈতিক চিন্তাধাৰা — প্ৰথম ভাগ’, ডিব্ৰুগড়ঃ বনলতা, ২০২১
- (৭) Padhya, K.S., *Indian Political Thought*, Delhi: PHI learning

Pvt, Ltd, 2016

- (৮) Mahadevan et.al. *Introduction to Indian Knowledge System*, Delhi: PHI learning Pvt, Ltd., 2022
- (৯) Dubey, Dr. Gunjan, "Indian Knowledge System: Key Principles & Concept", *International Journal of Social Impact*, 10 (1), 294-301, 2025
- (১০) National Education Policy 2020
- (১১) Khairnan, Dr. Mahendra Subhash, "Indian Knowledge System (IKS) with Reference to Legal System in India", *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 12 (7), 292 - 296

লেখক :

সহকারী অধ্যাপক, রাজনীতি বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ,
কাকজান মহাবিদ্যালয়

Ancient Roots, Modern Minds: Rediscovering the Indian Knowledge System

Editors:

Lakhya Protim Nirmolia
Tufail Zilani Imdad Ullah
Utpal Sadhonider

SABDA
PRAWASH

